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## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

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# The NEGRO NEWSPAPER

*by*

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Volume I of the Series  
THE NEGRO ENTREPRENEUR



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## Foreword

I FELT THE NEED for a comprehensive book or a series of small volumes on Negro business<sup>1</sup> when I first completed my master's thesis on "Commercial Education in Negro Colleges" at the University of Iowa in 1932. Five years later, I finished my doctor's thesis at Clark University (Massachusetts), using the same subject but enlarging its scope. This necessitated my visiting all the Negro colleges which were then offering business curricula. I was dismayed to find that many students as well as teachers knew very little about the historical background of Negro business, its difficulties, its needs, and its potentialities. This was due, in part, to the fact that there was not any worthwhile literature on Negro business other than a few articles scattered in various magazines, a few reports published some forty years earlier, a mimeographed book on the *Development*

<sup>1</sup>The phrase "Negro business" is used here and thruout this book to mean business enterprises owned and operated by Negroes.

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of *Negro Life Insurance Enterprise* by William J. Trent published in 1933, and two excellent tho old books on the Negro Press: *The Afro-American Press* by I. Garland Penn published in 1891 and *The Negro Press in the United States* by Frederick G. Detweiler published in 1922. Since then there have appeared two more books: *An Economic Detour: A history of insurance in the lives of American Negroes*, a book of very valuable tho poorly digested information written in 1940 by M. S. Stuart, a man in the insurance business; and the *Negro Business and Business Education*, the product of a comprehensive and valuable study sponsored by the General Education Board, written by Joseph A. Pierce, and published in 1947. The three volumes, which I am planning to publish under the general title of *The Negro Entrepreneur*, approach the subject of Negro business from a different angle; hence they do not duplicate Dr. Pierce's recent study, but definitely supplement it. These volumes have the added value of being highly critical as well as constructive in their evaluation of the present status of Negro business, especially since their author did not have to "sing to any one's tune."

Constant questioning by students about Negro business made me realize how urgent the need for such a book is. Thus it was that I first conceived the idea of writing it. With this in mind I tried for three years to secure a fellowship from the Rosenwald Fund and the

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General Education Board, but my efforts were unsuccessful. Later on when I learned that the General Education Board was financing a large scale study of Negro business under the auspices of Atlanta University and the National Urban League, I volunteered my services for conducting that part of the research which dealt with business education in Negro colleges and universities, but I was unable to get any sympathetic response.

It appears that most philanthropic organizations, and especially those which administer aid to minority groups, are closely tied with a few "proper" persons from each minority group, and unless these persons give the right signal, the applicant for aid is "out of luck." While I was trying all the available sources which would have permitted me to devote full time to this project, I was working diligently on it in my spare time and during summer vacations. The entire book, when completed, did not turn out to be as exhaustive as I would have liked even tho I had spent a considerable amount of time and money on study and travel to finish it. The difficulty of getting replies to letters sent to our business men, many of whom have failed to develop a sense of responsibility toward good public relations, made my task doubly hard. "The-public-be-damned" attitude, so common in our business men as evidenced by their wholesale failure to answer letters that do not bring in direct and immediate monetary returns, may be partly due to their short-sightedness

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and partly to their being comparatively free from keen competition in the business fields in which they are generally engaged.

Much of the material of the entire study has been ready for some time, but I was hesitant to release it. One general reaction of many of my friends who read the entire manuscript was that the book was too critical of Negro business. Yet, try as I would, I could find no way of being honest with myself and at the same time serviceable to the future of Negro business except by being critical; for in this way alone can real service be rendered. Sugar-coated criticism quite often misses its mark as the listener may fail to see beyond the sugar-coating and may develop an attitude of smugness which often leads him to ultimate ruination. An attitude of receptivity to constructive criticism, on the other hand, is something that all persons should be eager to cultivate if they really mean to make progress.

It is, indeed, disheartening and often sickening to see educators dissipating their creative ability in wrangling over the Du Bois vs Washington controversy instead of accepting the simple truth that both men were inspired with the highest of ideals and motives, that they were primarily interested not in themselves but in the uplift of the Negro as a whole, and that each expressed himself as he saw the problem and its solution. Being raised under different circumstances and with different back-

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grounds, their views were bound to be different, and to accuse either of them with race disloyalty is utter folly.

If one were to take Dale Carnegie seriously and follow the philosophy expressed in his popular book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, there would be no progress made in human society. There would be no men like W. E. B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, Phillip Randolph, Clayton Powell, and many others who certainly have never gone about with the sole idea of winning friends. "Mutual Admiration" societies à la Dale Carnegie may have their merits, but quite often they end in creating inflated heads—the worst curse of human progress, individual or group. When a patient needs an immediate surgical operation, no doctor can cure him by soft and pleasing words or by postponing the crucial day in order to keep the patient in good humor and win his friendship. Neither can die-hards and unimaginative and conservative people be aroused to action except by strong and stinging blows.

It is with these things in mind and with the full realization of my sense of responsibility that this series is being written in the hope that it might help in stimulating some of our business leaders to action by bringing them to accept the challenge offered in its pages. I am also hoping that the appearance of this book, changed into a series of small volumes for reasons explained later, might stimulate some agency to commission someone

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to devote his entire time to study and travel for two to three years in order to gather the information necessary for writing a more exhaustive treatise.

✓ The segregation of American Negroes, who comprise approximately one-tenth of the total population, has led to the development of a new philosophy. This philosophy, which has now many strong adherents, holds to the doctrine that the creation of a civilization within a civilization and the building of a segregated economy within the framework of a national economy are partial and temporary yet effective solutions to the Negro's socio-economic problems. It was this doctrine that led Booker T. Washington to organize the National Negro Business League in 1900; it had and still has thousands of adherents who are faithful to this day. I classify myself as one of them.

The depression of the thirties struck the Negro worker and the Negro business man most heavily. As a partial solution to their economic plight, several successful boycotts were launched in Chicago in the early thirties. Leaders of this movement were supported by Negro newspapers and business men, both of whom expected direct benefits from the success of such campaigns. These boycotts were directed only toward white business enterprises in Negro neighborhoods which did not employ Negro clerks, salesmen, or managers in their establish-

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ments. The slogan of this movement was: "Don't Spend Your Money Where You Can't Work." This meant that if Negroes were not being employed in business enterprises because of their race, then, out of self-respect as well as for self-protection, they should refrain from patronizing such enterprises and should buy their wares from Negro stores, or from white stores which do not discriminate against Negroes in their employment practices.

This movement brought many successful results and soon other cities, particularly those located in the North, followed Chicago's lead. While quite dormant during the recent war, when everyone who wanted work found work, it seems that the movement is likely to start again in full swing. The Vanguard League in Columbus, Ohio, under the leadership of Frank C. Shearer, a brilliant lawyer and an indefatigable worker; the Future Outlook League in Cleveland, under the dynamic leadership of John O. Holly; the Housewives' League in Detroit, under the leadership of Mrs. Fannie B. Peck; and many other similar organizations scattered thruout the United States have opened several new employment opportunities for Negroes during the Second World War, often without resorting to the boycott and picketing methods. Labor shortages existing during the recent war made their task easy. Other cities, particularly those in the North where the Negro has enough political freedom to assure for himself a reasonably fair deal in the courts, should do



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everything possible to gain further entries into white collar jobs. Organized effort should also be made for preserving the gains already made in such jobs.

If the policy "Don't Spend Your Money Where You Can't Work" is carried out to its logical conclusion, it not only strengthens the argument for a completely segregated economy (if such an economy is possible under our present complex industrial organization), but may lead to a counter movement by whites to shut out Negroes from work in those industries which do not enjoy a large Negro patronage. Such seems to be the contention of Dr. Abram L. Harris, formerly a professor of economics at Howard University and now employed by the University of Chicago, the most liberal of all liberal universities. In discussing the plight of the Negro middle class in his book *The Negro as Capitalist*, he expresses his conviction that the Negro leaders and business men behind this movement are motivated by the selfish desire to monopolize and to exploit the Negro market for themselves by replacing the white merchants. "The Negro masses who seem to follow them blindly do not see," asserts Dr. Harris, "that they have no greater exploiter than the black capitalist who lives upon low-waged if not sweated labor, although he and his family may, and often do, live in conspicuous luxury."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Abram L. Harris, *The Negro as Capitalist*, Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1936, p. 184.

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When one seriously but vainly looks around for philanthropic donations from Negro capitalists to aid in uplifting the masses on whose support they are thriving, one is forced to admit the truthful implications of Dr. Harris' statement. One can say, however, with equal truthfulness, that the fathers of the American Revolution were also guided by identical motives of self-advancement: they desired to capture the market then controlled by the English with a view to exploiting it for their own benefit. Our present competitive system of economy is so organized that the success of one individual is often achieved by the downfall of another. While, therefore, I agree with Dr. Harris in the contention that a black capitalist is no better than a white one, I believe that, in the absense of a better program, we should welcome further increase in the number of "black capitalists." Exploitation at best is bad, but, from a long range point-of-view, *the exploitation of a people by some of its own people is less devastating than exploitation by outsiders.* For that reason, the slogan "Don't Spend Your Money Where You Can't Work" should be constantly hammered into the consciousness of the buying public in spite of the possible, tho not probable, danger of the whites shutting out Negroes from work on similar grounds. Until a more practical program is presented, Negroes should continue their efforts by peaceful means to gain further entries into white business enterprises dependent upon Negro

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patronage. This movement should be carried down to Southern cities where conditions warrant such action.

I believe quite strongly that before the Negro can successfully fight for his complete integration in the present American social and economic order, he must build a strong "Negro economy" within the fabric of "white economy." With this in mind, I have pointed out in this series that the Negro has not even scratched the surface of many opportunities open to him even in the limited fields of business ventures and that he can easily expand his present business enterprises in retail trade, service establishments, insurance, newspapers, and service agencies dominated by whites to several times their present size by improving upon his present methods of doing business.

I have also pointed out in this series that blaming the educated classes for not supporting racial enterprises as blindly as the masses seem to do will only aggravate the problem and that what the Negro business man needs to do is to set his house in order and offer his services and goods only on the basis of "as good as any other at the same cost." After all, the primary purpose of every business man is to make a profit for himself. Any attempt to mislead the public on this issue will end in disaster. The Negro public is gradually becoming fool-proof against any and all ballyhoo tactics. At the same time, it is becoming more race conscious and hence more eager and willing to support Negro business. Low as the Ne-

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gro's economic status is, it should not be further lowered by a system of higher prices just to support racial enterprises. I have seen many white business enterprises located in Negro neighborhoods fail entirely whenever they received strong competition from Negro enterprises whose appeal rested solely on the quality of service rather than on race loyalty. Excellent examples of this will be given in the chapter on "Case histories of some successful business ventures" in the third volume, titled *The Negro's Adventure in General Business*.

It is high time that our business men realize that the days of ruthless competition and sharp business practices are passing away rapidly. As a result of the recent economic and political death struggle in which the whole world was engaged, a new social and economic order is emerging, slowly yet steadily, both here and abroad. The question, therefore, arises: Have Negro business men enough sound judgment and strength of character to reshape voluntarily their old worn-out *laissez faire* philosophy or will they have to be compelled to do this by the onslaught of changing social forces? Negro business has reached a milestone and it ought to be justly proud of this achievement, but, at the same time, it must also realize that the enviable and praiseworthy success of a handful of business men will in no way solve the problem of the ninety per cent of Negroes who are still living in

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ignorance and dire poverty. Our business men, therefore, must develop a social consciousness without which their success will not mean much to the masses.

The lack of social vision and philanthropic spirit in the Negro capitalist of today makes a very sad story indeed! Atlanta University is the only Negro institution which has an endowed chair for the training of Negro youth in business, but the endowment comes from white philanthropy. The means for the only large scale survey of the present status of Negro business, just completed by Atlanta University and the National Urban League, also came from white philanthropy. Negro business has reached such a height that it could have undertaken this study without any financial aid from any outside source. After all, there are many successful business men who have amassed considerable fortunes thru the patronage of their own race.

It might be noted here in passing that success of Negro business should not be measured merely by the number of Negro capitalists in proportion to white ones, but rather by the number of sympathetic Negro capitalists who are directly concerned in the Negro's welfare as against unsympathetic white ones who have nothing directly at stake and who often open business enterprises in Negro neighborhoods only as stepping stones for their later business ventures exclusively in the white world.

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To avoid delay and annoyance that would have been inevitable had I taken the necessary time to "shop around" for a publisher for this book, I decided to undertake this job myself and go thru the thrill, the anxiety, and the worry incident to the publication and marketing of the book. I soon realized, however, that the printing costs had risen over 100 per cent in the case of low cost establishments which hitherto had asked only a nominal price. The increased printing cost meant the sinking in of a larger sum of money than I could very well afford, especially when one considers the relatively limited market for this type of product. If I had decided to print several thousand copies, the unit cost would have fallen down considerably, but, on the basis of available statistics, I concluded that only a small number of copies will satisfy the market, thus making the unit cost very high. It was the prohibitive cost of printing and binding plus my unwillingness to delay the publication any longer that led me to the decision of dividing the book as originally conceived into a series of three volumes and of publishing one volume at a time.

Such a plan for publishing the book has another advantage. Material on such important ventures as newspapers, insurance, banking, and others is likely to be lost in a large book on the general subject of business. Division, on the other hand, into three small and easily readable volumes will afford proper emphasis to each of

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these types of ventures. All these considerations led me to divide the larger book, *The Negro Entrepreneur*, into the following three volumes:

*The Negro Newspaper*

*Negro Insurance and Banking*

*The Negro's Adventure in General Business*

The names of the first two volumes are self-explanatory and require no further elaboration. In the third volume, *The Negro's Adventure in General Business*, I discuss the subject of popular business ventures. The following topics will indicate the scope: A brief history of the development of Negro business, economic development of the Negro, business opportunities open to Negroes, the National Negro Business League, case histories of some successful business ventures, and a functional program of business education. Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute and past president of the National Negro Business League for several years, has written the introduction to the third volume.

The question of business education in Negro colleges, the type of curricula offered, the demand for such education, the need for changes in their present program, and other matters dealing with business education have been touched but lightly in the third volume under the chapter titled "A functional program of business education." Education for business training is, in reality, a sep-

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arate and distinct phase of Negro business—a phase which has unfortunately been neglected too long by educators and by business men. Since adequate training programs in business will undoubtedly help in the healthy development of Negro business, it is my intention to discuss, in full detail, the entire question of business education in Negro colleges, either as a fourth volume of this series or as a separate book.

*The Negro Newspaper* is selected to appear as the first of the series because of my conviction that a critical evaluation of the Negro Press is overdue and that withholding this material any longer would make it stale. I have shown in this volume that newspapers have already lost a major part of their leadership in molding public opinion and that, unless they begin rapidly to develop a genuine social consciousness, they will lose their leadership entirely and become like gramophones without souls. In reading this volume one might suddenly realize that *the newspapers of today do not necessarily reflect public opinion and that what is normally passed on by them as such is often the reflection of the thinking of their editors or publishers.* Keeping in mind that the newspapers “make no bones” about criticizing everything that in any way conflicts with their own pet ideas, I have been very critical in evaluating them in the hope that they will take such criticism as gracefully as they “dish it out.” I have also made some suggestions for their improvement.



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So many persons have helped me in various ways in putting this series of three volumes together that it is impossible to name all of them here. A few persons, however, deserve special mention. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute, for his active encouragement in having me as guest of the institution while I used the files of its Records and Research Department and for his direct contribution to this series in writing the introduction to the third volume; to Mr. Charles H. Loeb, news editor of the *Cleveland Call and Post* and president of the Editorial Society of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, for his introduction to this volume; to Professor E. Champ Warrick of Wilberforce University for the excellent and meticulous editing and proofreading which have made the book more readable; to Miss Mollie E. Dunlap, Librarian of Wilberforce University, for help in securing reference material thru inter-library loans and for assistance in proofreading the manuscript; to Dr. Charles Leander Hill, president of Wilberforce University, for his concrete encouragement in every possible way; to the Youngs, father and sons, of the *Journal and Guide*, to Professor Armistead S. Pride of the School of Journalism at Lincoln University, Missouri, and to Mr. Joseph B. La Cour, manager of the Associated Publishers, Inc., for their critical, valuable, and helpful comments on certain sections of this volume dealing with their special fields of

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interest; to the staffs of Fisk and Howard libraries for their courtesies; and to my wife Evangeline who urged me to finish the series with constant assurance that even if no one else prized them she would, nevertheless, regard them highly as crowning several years' hard labor and arising out of a sincere desire to tell the truth as I saw it in the hope that it would help Negro business in the long run. I must add that I assume full responsibility for the interpretations of facts and for the points-of-view expressed. Those who have advised and helped me should not be saddled with any blame or censure whatsoever. Finally, I am indebted to the management of the Antioch Press for their sympathetic guidance born out of wide experience in dealing with manuscripts.

## Introduction

By CHARLES H. LOEB\*

WHEREVER YOU FIND the Negro newspaper, whether its editorial policy is militant or accommodating, blatantly radical or complacently conservative, you will find a medium of special advocacy of human rights.

With a few exceptions, and not all of them in the deep South, you will find the Negro Press a fighting press. Seldom is the perusal of its pages a pleasant venture into a new literature for its growing number of white readers, for the pages of America's Negro newspapers almost incessantly cry out in big bold type against the injustices of the second-class citizenship accorded its readers.

It is not strange that a considerable number of white readers of Negro newspapers are prone to believe that Negro editorial writers turn out their copy on some

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\*President, Editorial Society, Negro Newspaper Publishers Association.

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special type of wailing wall, for a major proportion of editorials in the Negro Press are fervent cries for or against something. Negro editors cry out for justice, cry out for equal opportunity, complain bitterly against the *status quo* which relegates its readers to disfranchisement and economic slavery in the Southland and to slum ghettos and job discriminations in the Northern sections of the nation. There are cries against the Bilboes, Rankins, and Talmadges in the South, and cries for modern white emancipators to arise in the North.

And there is only here and there the faintest expression of hope that this journalistic wailing at the wall will soon abate. Those who expect the honestly-motivated Negro journalist to depart soon from this incessant wailing are in for a great deal of disappointment, for the very origin of the Negro newspaper is steeped in the fight against injustice. The first Negro newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, was launched in 1827 by John B. Russwurm and Samuel E. Cornish as an abolitionist organ in the struggle to eradicate slavery. Frederick Douglass' *North Star* was brought into being during the Civil War and was one of the most potent factors leading up to the emancipation proclamation.

Strangely enough, there exists no planning, no collusion, no overall strategy between Negro newsmen in this unanimity of protest, for the policies of the Negro Press have never been regulated by a central voice of

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authority. Indeed, it is only within very recent years that the intense rivalry among Negro publishers for the limited number of available readers has permitted the organization of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association in which less than 75 of the nation's more than 200 periodicals maintain membership. Even this Association, while bringing Negro publishers and journalists together for consideration of such common problems as the standardization of rates, elimination of offensive advertising, and higher journalistic standards, and for comparison of business techniques, makes little or no attempt to govern the editorial or news policies of its member papers.

The growth of the Negro Press, at least in circulation, has been in almost direct proportion to the growth in literacy among American Negroes, and the trend is toward continuing growth. In 1870, there were 10 Negro journals in North America; in 1880, there were 21; in 1890 there were 154. In 1880, there were Negro publications in 19 states; in 1890, in 28 states. Most of them had small, almost negligible, circulation. Many of them were fly-by-night propositions that soon failed, but some of them like the *Washington Bee*, the *Cleveland Gazette*, the *Philadelphia Tribune*, and the *New York Age* were destined to have many years of national influence. The majority of these early newspapers were "One-Man" propositions, printed for the most part in plants owned and

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operated by whites, and usually terminating with the demise of their publishers.

Today, the nation's most influential Negro newspapers are housed in modern plants where hundreds of well-trained craftsmen are employed. Whenever the coals of adverse criticism are heaped upon the heads of Negro publishers and working newsmen, they may well take pride in the consideration of the almost unsurmountable obstacles that were overcome in the process of developing these plants.

Few other business enterprises operated by any people anywhere have had to seek maturity against such handicaps as have confronted the Negro publisher. To begin with, there were the formidable barriers against the Negro's attempt to obtain higher education—the higher education that is the requisite to the faultless, fluent, objective writing so ardently desired by those who castigate the Negro Press for its inaccuracy, sensationalism, and poor format.

Confronting every Negro who embarks upon a publisher's career are the dead bodies of previous failures. However, once embarked upon this risky career the would-be publisher faces the still insurmountable barrier of frozen bank credits. What sensible white banker can be expected to give financial aid and succor to a propaganda vehicle dedicated to resist worker-exploitation, and which incessantly wails against the *status quo*? "Why

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warm this viper at our financial bosom?" was the thinking of the white banker of yesterday—and of today.

It is for this reason that there is a story strikingly repetitious in the history of every successful Negro newspaper. A lone pioneer who writes his own stories and editorials, has them printed in a white shop, distributes his own circulation, solicits his own ads, until bit by bit the necessary machinery is assembled; one by one the mechanical force is employed. This is the familiar story of the Robert S. Abbotts, the Murphy Brothers, the Youngs of Virginia, the William O. Walkers, and others whose names are outstanding in Negro journalism today.

Then comes the tortuous business of training typesetters, compositors, layout men, stereotypers, and pressmen for the slowly developing plants. Only two schools in the nation, Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes, have offered Negro Americans the mere semblance of typographical training. Schools in which Negroes may learn to operate high speed rotary presses are virtually nonexistent. The craft unions that dominate the printing industry are still closed to Negro youth for apprentice training. Negro photo-engravers, of whom there are fewer than fifty in the United States, are either self-taught or the products of other Negroes employed in Negro newspaper plants.

No one knows better than the publisher of a small Negro newspaper how much tolerance of a sympathetic

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readership, a readership hungry for news of its progress and grateful for a champion, has figured in the continuing growth of the Negro Press. Without this tolerance, few of today's Negro newspapers would have been able to survive the thousands of poorly-printed editions, the atrocious cuts and engravings, the complete lack of format and balance, and the galleys of stale news that have characterized so many Negro newspapers.

This tolerance is the most eloquent tribute that can be paid to the type of unselfish community service the great, great majority of Negro publishers have sought to render. The charlatans and fakes, the self-seekers and false leaders, the political opportunists and race traitors rarely survive for more than a year or two.

Negro publishers are engaged in a ceaseless struggle for anything resembling a fair share of advertising revenue. It is only within recent years that the Negro Press has received even token accounts from big national advertisers. However, there are many of the "middle class" newspapers (circulation between 40,000 and 60,000) which have learned to develop their local markets. These papers are running close to fifty per cent advertising in their columns, securing the major portion of their business from Negro-owned establishments in the community, from white-owned establishments in the Negro community, and thru local tie-ins with national advertisers. Wherever the smaller "local" newspapers have overcome



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this advertising dilemma they have ousted the objectionable "lucky charm," dream book, and occult advertising from their columns. Since the formation of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association there has been a significant reduction of this type of copy in newspapers operated by its members.

There can be no question today of the enormous importance of the Negro Press in forming Negro opinion, in the improvement of educational opportunities for Negroes, in the field of interracial relationships, and in the elevation of the level of the Negro people towards incontestable equality with their fellow citizens of other races.

For many years the Negro minister was the only leader of the race. He was both spiritual and practical leader. The advent and growth of the Negro Press has seriously challenged this exclusive leadership, and unfortunately, has created much unnecessary and, at times, ridiculous strife between these two important molders of Negro thought and progress. The astute Negro newsman is the last to underestimate the continuing influence and power of the Negro pulpiteer, and he is generally eager to seek his cooperation. Only the most self-centered and ill-advised of today's Negro ministers fails to avail himself of the cooperation freely offered him by the nation's Negro newsmen.

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There are glorious years ahead for the Negro Press which Dr. Oak, the author of this book, so aptly points out, "has now definitely passed its initial period of experiment, of evangelism, and of missionary zeal."

So long as the metropolitan newspapers of our nation continue to play down Negro achievement while playing up Negro crime; so long as they persist in ignoring the cultural and social life of the Negro people; so long as they continue their stubborn policy of giving only passing thought to the Negro citizen as an American entity of considerable importance; so long as they are overly cautious in joining the crusade for full equality for all Americans regardless of racial origin or of color, the Negro Press will remain indispensable to Negro progress.

As the educational level of the Negro people rises, a larger and more exacting audience will be afforded the Negro Press. As Dr. Oak points out in his illuminating treatment of the subject, the Negro Press must become aware of the need to meet this rapidly-developing audience of critics. In future years, the Negro Press will find itself called upon to produce a better printed, better written, and more objective newspaper. I am confident that it will meet this challenge.

In the not too distant future, with the necessary improvement and expansion of the already established news agencies and the ability of Negro publishers to procure modern news facilities, there will come into being power-

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ful daily newspapers operated by Negroes—not weekly newspapers printed daily, but real dailies providing world news highlights regardless of color or implications, and retaining the same devotion to racial unity and progress that is the outstanding characteristic of today's Negro weeklies.

Even with the coming of the day—and it will come—when a citizen of the world will be recognized for his ability and merit regardless of his race or color or religion, the Negro Press will continue to flourish. While one would be indeed blind if he failed to see the constant movement in America away from intolerance and racial discrimination, the Negro publisher hardly has reason to visualize impending doom.

Gunnar Myrdal, in his *American Dilemma*, after an exhaustive study of Negro problems and institutions in the United States, concludes that the Negro Press is “the greatest single power in the Negro race.”

Certainly no Negro journalist of today would be daring enough to make such a statement, but when it is considered how few Negro publishers have ever become millionaires, and how, until in recent years, hundreds of conscientious Negro men and women operated these newspapers with high altruism and low pay, it is not unseemly to regard the Negro Press as one of the most self-sacrificing agencies engaged in the fight for Negro progress.

## INTRODUCTION

The true Negro newsman, and I am happy in my association with his breed, is possessed with high courage and higher zeal. In the fight to improve the conditions of his people, he has learned that praise and plaudits are seldom given the "wailer, the crusader, or the reformer," and that criticism for his obvious shortcomings will always be abundant; but secure in the comfortable knowledge that he is fighting the good fight for the good cause, he is content. He reaps a daily reward in the consideration of the unmistakable signs of progress about him: the increase in literacy, the increase in the Negro life span, the hard-won victories over tuberculosis in the slums, the increasing political consciousness among a people only recently enfranchised, and the slow but sure increase in civic responsibilities. He likes to believe that his stories, oftentimes poorly written and none too accurate, and his deathless editorials fabricated out of paper, ink, and devotion have contributed.

To him the bright horizon of full growth, full equality with all men, and full citizenship for America's fifteen million stepchildren is ever the challenge ahead.

## A Critical Evaluation of the Negro Newspaper (*Favorable*)

THERE IS NO OTHER economically self-supporting institution in Negro life and culture that has made so rapid an advance or that has helped so whole-heartedly in the acceleration of the social, economic, and political progress of the Negro as its press. There have been occasions when the influence of the press over public opinion seemed to have declined considerably. This was true in the 1940 and 1944 presidential election campaigns when Republican dollars were often dictating the editorial policies of many of our newspapers. By and large, however, the Negro Newspaper, referred to hereafter as the Negro Press, has always stood as the champion of the people it served and has rendered unusually effective and faithful service to the cause of America's neglected and mistreated one-tenth. "The importance of the Negro press for the formation of Negro

## AN EVALUATION (FAVORABLE)

opinion, for the functioning of all other Negro institutions, for Negro leadership and concerted action generally, is enormous. The Negro press is an educational agency and a power agency."<sup>1</sup>

The Negro Newspaper (Press) has now definitely passed its initial period of experiment, of evangelism, and of missionary zeal, and is approaching a professional standard which approximates and occasionally surpasses the best standards of many white country dailies or weeklies. The Negro Press, which is still ninety-eight per cent a weekly press, is now being financed by Negro capital; written, edited, and managed by Negro brains; set in type by Negro typesetters; made ready to run thru the press by Negro mechanics; and distributed by Negro salesmen. Some newspapers are well written and well edited, and perform their news and advertising functions serviceably. A few also present a pleasing typographical appearance. The larger publications like the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Afro-American*, the *Chicago Defender*, and the *Journal and Guide*, whose combined ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulations) total of 750,000 a week in June, 1947, is rapidly approaching the million mark in 1948, are nationally circulating weeklies. The *New York Amsterdam News* and the *People's Voice*, both

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<sup>1</sup>Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro problem and modern democracy*, Harper and Brothers Publishers. 1944, Volume 2, p. 923.

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

published in New York City, are papers which emphasize local news and perform the function of city newspapers as capably as many of the outstanding white dailies, covering, however, only news touching the Negro.

### ONE HUNDRED PER CENT AMERICAN

Contrary to what some persons like Pegler and Bilbo have led the public to believe, the Negro Press and its five million readers are not un-American. In spite of its vehement tho just attack on lynching and poll-tax, even while the Second World War was going on, it has championed whole-heartedly the cause of the allies. Time and again, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Afro-American*, the *Chicago Defender*, the *Journal and Guide*, the *People's Voice*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, the *New York Age*, the *Chicago Bee*, the *Kansas City Call*, the *Ohio State News*, the *Cleveland Call and Post*, and the *St. Louis Argus*, to mention only a few, have written editorials pointing out to their readers that the ultimate salvation of the Negro lay in the allies winning the war. While a German-American may look for a home in Germany or an Italian-American in Italy, the American Negro does not look for a home in Africa even tho he was originally brought here from that continent against his will.

Culturally, the American Negro is as different from the African Negro as any white man and his loyalty to the American Flag is as strong as that of the descendants

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of the pilgrim fathers. The American Negro's cultural heritage is one hundred per cent American, for the rigorous life during the days of slavery wiped out all his background of African culture. Under these circumstances, the American Negro cannot be anything but loyal to the United States since that is the only place he can call his home.<sup>2</sup> Aside from a few uneducated and misguided persons who were found to have some sort of connection with a Japanese organization, Negroes have not been found guilty of sabotage, espionage, and other subversive activities in war times.

It is true that the Negro Press is becoming more and more militant in its demand for a real democracy at home, but this growing impatience is quite natural and very desirable. As a matter of fact, all of the non-white races in the world today are demanding greater economic and political freedom, and unless the American Negro is entirely unintelligent and unprogressive he is bound to demand his right to be a free citizen in the real sense of the word, especially when he has but recently fought abroad for the cause of freedom.

If the *People's Voice* under the powerful pen of the Reverend A. Clayton Powell, Jr., congressman since 1945 and dynamic and dramatic leader of the Negro masses in Harlem, had been militant during the Second World

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<sup>2</sup>V. V. Oak, "What of the Negro Press?" *Saturday Review of Literature*, 26: 45-46 ff, March 6, 1943.



## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

War in putting the issues of the Negro to the forefront to such an extent that it had led some white persons to assert that it was an un-American paper, I wonder in what category would these same persons place the defiant *Chicago Tribune* during its trial in the summer of 1942 for having published Stanley Johnson's dispatch concerning the battle of Midway and thus exposing strictly military information. To climax it all, the *Tribune* held a gala banquet to celebrate its legal tho not moral victory over the Justice Department of the United States at a time when we were busy fighting a war with Germany, Italy, and Japan.

This defiant and apparently unpatriotic attitude of the *Tribune* which makes both the so-called militant Negro and white papers appear pale; the daring refusal of several white companies in the South to accept war orders during the Second World War because they did not want to follow the Presidential order against racial discrimination in the use of labor; the support given to such refusals by governors of certain Southern states; the viciously organized opposition against anti-lynching and FEPC legislation of certain reactionary Northern Republicans and most Southern Democrats who are still dreaming of the long-vanished glories of plantation days; the dangerous assertions of several Southern white newspapermen and other influential white persons that, if winning the war meant greater freedom for the Negro,

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they would prefer to lose the war; and the revolting reactions of some Southern Democrats and even governors to the recent forthright pronouncements of President Truman on the civil rights of Negro Americans in this country—reactions which make every believer in democracy hang his head down in shame—these and other similar assertions and acts, and not the cry of the Negro for justice and fair-play, seem to be not only undemocratic and, therefore, un-American, but definitely fascist.

What the Negro Press is demanding is exactly what responsible leaders of the now-dead New Deal and all modern social thinkers interested in saving democracy have been asserting boldly, namely, that a new economic, social, and political order must come without delay, now that the war is over. By trying to meet the pressing needs of the masses before they reach the exploding point, these forward thinkers are helping to save capitalism from the resultant social and economic chaos of revolution and the tragic death of capitalism as a result of this revolution.

### THE CHAMPION OF THE NEGRO CAUSE

The Negro Press arose out of the dire need for racial leadership, and hence, it is natural that it should be largely racial in its outlook. In fact, its success is due to its being racial, supplementing as it does the service rendered by the white press.

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In general, the Negro Press is interested in news that touches the Negro, and rarely, if ever, pays any attention to news that has no racial significance. The kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby, one of the biggest stories of the American press, was hardly noticed by the Negro Press until it was reported that a Negro had found the body of the Lindbergh baby. "Dizzy" Dean (white) was of no news value to the Negro Press until his team was playing against the Monarchs, a Negro team. Since the white press ignores the Negro almost completely, except to play him up as a criminal or a clown, the Negro Press is becoming more and more a necessity to its readers as the purveyor of news about its own group.

When the world-famous singer Roland Hayes, for example, was beaten and put into jail in July, 1942, by the believers in white supremacy in Rome, Georgia, white newspapers did not give any prominence to this news, and most of them completely ignored it. Friends of Roland Hayes had to wait until the complete story broke in the Negro Press with strong editorials on the incident. While some white papers later gave publicity to this incident, which, in most cases, consisted merely in printing a United Press release in which Governor Talmadge defended the beating of Roland Hayes on the ground that he had kicked a policeman, it was the Negro Press that came to Hayes' defense by pointing out the absurdity of the charge against this most peaceloving and highly sen-

## AN EVALUATION (FAVORABLE)

sitive man who would never lift his finger against anyone, even under provocation!

Discussing this phase of the Negro Press, the *Fortune* magazine made the following interesting observations in a special feature article:

The pictures in Negro newspapers are of Negroes or of mixed Negro-white groups. The news is news of Jim Crow regulations . . . ; it is news of Negroes winning scholarships, of Negroes in battle, of Negroes denied commissions, of Negroes running for local office, of Negroes sitting on committees with white men, of white men speaking up for Negroes, of white men embarrassed because they have neglected Negroes. And, except when it is news thus angled, there is no news of national affairs, of the war, of Congress, of the President, of industry. The Negro press deals single-mindedly with the problems of being a Negro in the United States, the prospects, the troubles, the triumphs, and the despairs of all those for whom the fact of being a Negro outweighs, for a part of the time at least, all other concerns.<sup>8</sup>

The Negro Press is undoubtedly contributing a great deal to the preservation of American democracy by its virtuous fight in behalf of its people, is rendering invaluable service to the cause of justice and fair-play, and is capable of understanding and appreciating India's

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<sup>8</sup>Fortune Press Analysis: Negroes, *Fortune*, May, 1945, pp. 233, 235.

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

fight for freedom, Burma's utter apathy toward England's success during the last world war, and Africa's complete distrust of the white man! The *Pittsburg Courier* with its "Double V" campaign during the Second World War made both colored and white readers realize that we had to win victory not only abroad but also at home. The *Afro-American* with its fearless editorials coupled with its special editions on vital issues; the *Chicago Defender* with its new and comparatively progressive policy toward labor and its ability to plan and successfully execute campaigns as evidenced by its bold and frank stand on the fourth term for Roosevelt in 1944; the *Journal and Guide* with its non-sensational approach toward Negro news and opinion and its non-aggressive yet balanced leadership in the South; the *People's Voice* with its dynamic and aggressive tho highly dramatic and sensational attacks on all questions affecting the Negro's welfare; the *Cleveland Call and Post* with its methods of keeping alive for a long period of time any cause it may have espoused; these, along with many other newspapers, have been serving the people of America in a commendable way.

### WIDENING HORIZON

The advance of the Negro Press has been made in credulous aping of the white dailies. Negro newspapers are still startlingly similar to white papers in structure,

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duplicating their good and bad features alike. As yet, they do not seem to show any special evidence of a "distinctive personality" other than their almost one hundred per cent racial emphasis. This lack of distinctiveness may be due to the fact that Negro journalists have been so preoccupied with bringing their papers abreast of those of the whites that they have neglected to introduce new patterns into the business of collecting and editing news.<sup>4</sup>

How well they have succeeded in modernizing their papers will become evident from a study of the following indices of rapidly growing maturity: the organization of several press and syndicate services; the printing of national and local editions, and different editions for different states or regions; the emergent use of color presses by the more opulent weeklies (suspended during the Second World War); the appearance of strong newspaper affiliations; the growing patronage of white business enterprises as evidenced by the number of "ads" from this source; the creation of extensive promotional activities among both their colored carriers and the general public; and the increasing space that is allotted to foreign news that affects the fate of all the colored peoples of the world.

This last international aspect of the problem of the

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<sup>4</sup>John Syrjamaki, "The Negro Press in 1938," *Sociology and Social Research*, 24: 1, September-October, 1939, p. 44.

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"colored" races of the world, first introduced by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois thru the *Crisis* magazine as early as the First World War, will now be found in all the better class weeklies. "The editor's horizon," observes Professor Detweiler, "is at least as wide as that of a small-town white editor and often wider. Negro writers are interested in South Africa, where there is a huge race problem; in Brazil, where the color line is indistinct; in Soviet Russia . . . ; in the Virgin Islands, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Liberia. From Spain, toward the end of 1937, Langston Hughes was writing articles for the *Afro-American*, which sent a man to Russia to interview Stalin, to Berlin for the Olympics, and to Geneva to witness the appearance of Haile Selassie before the League of Nations."<sup>5</sup>

The large number of Negro foreign correspondents in the Second World War is a further proof of the growing world-consciousness of the Negro Press. From the opening of the war to 1946, the *Chicago Defender* had five foreign correspondents: Deton J. Brooks, David Orro, George Padmore, Edward B. Toles, and Enoc P. Waters; the *Journal and Guide* had five: Henry J. Cole, Lemuel E. Graves, John "Rover" Jordan, P. Bernard Young, Jr., and Thomas W. Young; the *Afro-American* had eight: "Art" M. Carter, Herbert M. Frisby, Payton Grey, Max Johnson, Elizabeth M. Phillips (first Negro woman war

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<sup>5</sup>Frederick G. Detweiler, "The Negro Press Today," *American Journal of Sociology*, 44: 3, November 1938, p. 398.

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correspondent in this war), Ollie Stewart, Vincent Tubbs, and Francis Yancy; the *Pittsburgh Courier* had eight: Edward Baker, Haskell Cohen, Randy Dixon, Collins George, Oliver Harrington, Theodore A. Stanford, Edgar T. Rouzeau, and Billy Rowe; and the *Houston Informer* had one: Elgin Hychew. In addition to these, the Associated Negro Press (ANP) had three full time foreign correspondents: Rudolph Dunbar, Frank D. Gordien, and George Coleman Moore, and six part time correspondents; the National Negro Publishers Association (NNPA) had three: Frank E. Bolden, Charles H. Loeb, and Fletcher P. Martin.

Time and again, the leading Negro newspapers denounced the Hitlerian tactics of Winston Churchill in his dealings with India and for his gall in imprisoning men like Gandhi and Nehru who were fighting for their country's freedom even as Churchill was fighting for his. But while Churchill was being hailed as a savior of democracy, Gandhi and Nehru were put into prison like common criminals, and the White Press did not seem concerned very much about it. The Negro Press, on the other hand, alert as it had become in recent years in matters affecting all colored races of the world, detected the hypocrisy and duplicity behind this international scene. "There is probably not a single issue of any one of the big weeklies which does not point out the failure of the British to give India independence, or contain editorial



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reflections to the effect that the defeat in Singapore and elsewhere was due to the Britishers' having maltreated and lost the confidence of the natives. China, moreover, cannot be expected to have too much trust in America which discriminates against all colored people."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Myrdal, *op. cit.*, Volume 2, p. 915.

## A Critical Evaluation of the Negro Newspaper (*Unfavorable*)

HAVING DISCUSSED some of the shining points of the Negro Press in the preceding chapter, let us turn our attention to some of the weak ones which make the Negro Press so easily vulnerable to the attacks of men like Bilbo, Pegler, and others.

### SENSATIONALISM

If the Negro Press is often accused of sensationalism or of featuring crime stories, it can truthfully retort that it learned this art from such widely read white papers as the *New York Daily News*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Hearst* chain newspapers. The *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Afro-American*, the *Chicago Defender*, and the *People's Voice*, the first two of which have the largest circulation of all Negro newspapers, definitely go in for sensationalism. On the other hand, papers like the *Journal and*

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*Guide*, the *New York Age*, and a few others, which are rendering great service to the Negro community, do so without stooping to follow the footsteps of "yellow" journalism.

One cannot but deplore, however, the following type of journalistic license, especially when it comes from a newspaper with unlimited possibilities. Writing under the appropriately named column, "Soapbox," the Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., the leader of the Harlem masses whose everyday language he certainly knows how to use, a preacher of the gospel, founder of a dynamic newspaper, and now a congressman, had this to say in his paper, the *People's Voice*:

The attack by Martin Dies on Mary McLeod Bethune is the last straw. Dies has already won infamy as an international jackass, but today, with your permission, let us omit the "jack." Any low cracker scum like Dies who will dare to point his finger at a great American woman like Dr. Bethune deserves to be publicly purged. Dies is no good, never has been any good, and never will be any good. The sooner he is buried the better. He is one of the few people in history whose body has begun to stink before it died. Dies is Public Skunk No. 1. There is only one place for him to live and that's in Hitler's out-house. . . .

THE AXIS NEEDS DIES TODAY—BUT WE DON'T.  
TO HELL WITH HIM!

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<sup>7</sup>The *People's Voice*, October 3, 1942, p. 5.

## *AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)*

The "Soapbox" was continued by Powell in the same tone until he severed all his connections with that paper by the end of 1946.

The author regards Powell as a dynamic, useful, and courageous leader who has done a great deal of good in awakening the masses, especially those residing in Harlem, and who will be able to do more good as days go by, and the colored masses all over the world are proud of his actual accomplishments. Nevertheless, it seems that to lead the masses one does not have to stoop to such a low level that the cultural veneer, which a good education is supposed to have given to every learned man, disappears. The theatrical performances and utterances of Powell do bewilder many of his friends and admirers and cause them despair, tho these utterances do, undoubtedly, keep him in the limelight. Well might Powell say in his characteristic way, "To hell with the intelligentsia and the white-collared men! I am the messiah of the masses and I must talk in a language that the masses will understand." The fact that his own collar is ultra-white and that he wears the preacher's garb does not worry him. His motto for the common man is: "Don't do as I do, but do as I say," and the common man seems to accept this motto as the last word from heaven, believing honestly that "the messiah can do no wrong." That Powell is inevitably the leader of the masses and that he knows how to lead them is beyond question, tho one is often

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afraid that he might lead them wrong. In any event, he has awakened Harlem, and that in itself is a worthy accomplishment.

The emphasis on sensationalism is often justified by Negro journalists on the ground that "that is what the public wants." It would be more honest to say that that is what the scandal- or sensation-lover journalists think the public wants, which, of course, is quite a different story. If one were to evaluate public tastes thru the eyes of these newspapers one would arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the public has no heart, no brains, no conscience, and no ideals or worthy aspirations; that the public is cruel and mean at heart and entirely disinterested in its own uplift or that of its children; that it loves to read filth, devour stories of murder, crooked politics, vilification, misrepresentation, and Machiavelian art; and that, such being the case, the public taste having reached the lowest level of degradation—the press cannot do anything about it. So, the scandal- or sensation-mongers contend, the smart thing to do is to cater to this degraded taste of the public even more, "make hay while the sun shines," and let the public pay for it since it is in the mood to do so. The pity of it all is that these so-called gentlemen of the press fail to realize that what they think is the taste of the public is often the reflection of their own hidden tastes.

## *AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)*

### SO-CALLED "ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST"

One should not be completely blinded by the rapid stride of the Negro Press, discussed at greater length in the next chapter, and fail to notice some of its unpleasant features. The fact that some newspapers have been able to survive thru the depression, have become more affluent, and have enlarged their circulation enormously does not necessarily mean that they were always serving the interest of the people best or that they were idealistic and impartial in their approach to all questions. In our present competitive economic and social order and with our emphasis upon material wealth as the key to social advancement, "survival of the fittest" does not necessarily mean survival of the morally or even physically fit, but rather it means survival of the cunning and the ruthless who are often motivated by greed, referred to by the more pleasing tho less accurate and thoroly euphemistic phrase, "enlightened self-interest." Such persons know how to get things done by hook or crook.

It seems that, by and large, the newspapers of today, be they colored or white, do not seem to have the zeal of real crusaders passionately devoted to the principles of democracy, freedom, honesty, and fair play, especially when such principles hurt their pocketbooks. On the other hand, many newspapers seem quite willing to sell their pages to anyone who is willing to pay the proper

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price. In this respect, most Negro journalists have followed the steps of white journalists and have become economic opportunists, which, of course, makes them "good business men." According to them, any policy is good in business if it pays well and shows higher profits, especially if it is a generally-accepted and tacitly-followed policy among other business men. By and large, American business men do not seem to be concerned with the long-range effects of their policies upon social welfare. This apathy on their part may be partly due to their selfishness, partly to their ignorance, and partly to their lack of vision in looking ahead into the future.

Discussing the general policies of one of the "Big Four" Negro papers during the presidential campaign of 1944, one of the author's students made the following observation:

One notes that while undoubtedly favoring FDR's fourth term, this paper continues to include in its pages *large and impressive* advertisements for Dewey and Bricker. But whether this fact is to be interpreted as an evidence of a half-hearted attempt to show the point of view of the opposite side, or whether it is motivated merely by a lucrative interest, there might be some doubt.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Ethel Coleman in a term paper on "A sociological study of the . . . newspaper published during the last six weeks of the 1944 presidential campaign," written as a partial requirement in the course on "General Sociology" given by the author at Wilberforce University in 1944-45.

## *AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)*

This quotation is given here because it represents a point of view that cannot be easily ignored. It is a thought-provoking statement and just the type one should expect from young people, but the owner of the newspaper, to whom these remarks were sent, took exceptions to it in the following words:

Such a reference is a serious reflection upon the integrity of any newspaper. The only thing a newspaper has to sell, with the exception of subscriptions, is its advertising space, which is its main source of revenue. All legitimate newspapers display political advertising from all parties. The fact that our newspaper carried display advertising placed by the Republican National Committee and plainly marked "Paid Advertising" did not mean that our paper was attempting in a half-hearted manner to present the other side. Such a view displays only the ignorance of the person who would write even in a student paper such a statement.<sup>9</sup>

The student's counter response was that instead of putting the words "Paid Advertising" at the top in bold type, they were placed in tiny type at the bottom, hardly noticeable by the average reader. Furthermore, the advertisement did not carry its message in unbiased words but in general and suggestive statements maliciously derogatory to the Roosevelt administration — statements

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<sup>9</sup>From a letter dated January 6, 1945, written by the owner of the newspaper to the author when he submitted to him the student's paper in question.



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which the masses could easily misinterpret as those in which the newspaper itself believed. In fact, it was this belief in being able to mislead the masses, in the first place, that had led the Republican party to pay so heavily for the clever and suggestive "ads" which appeared all over the nation.

The reasoning of the owner of the newspaper, in a sense, is very much akin to that followed by our big business men year in and year out—business men who seem always willing to sell arms to both sides of the fighting forces, as they actually did in the late thirties to various warring factions in China for continuing their civil war, to Japan when she started an unjustifiable war of greed against China, and to Italy when she attacked without the slightest provocation a helpless nation like Ethiopia. As if this were not enough, our business men supplied scrap iron to Japan for a long period of years—the scrap iron she used in making deadly weapons with which she struck us at Pearl Harbor. Yet, these very business men naively wondered why things got out of their control and why the ever-dupable public was so ready to accuse them for all the ills of war. "Business is business," as Lanny Budd's<sup>10</sup> father would put it, or "mon-

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<sup>10</sup>Lanny Budd is the dynamic, philosophic, and fictitious character drawn by Upton Sinclair and made the hero of a series of novels depicting the intriguing and shocking scenes behind the international and intra-national life of Europe and America.

## AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)

ey does not stink" (*pecunia non olet*), as the Romans used to say, are also the mottoes of our successful business men of today, both white and colored.

Even at the risk of annoying some of our readers, it seems necessary to point out here that it is just this sort of utilitarian philosophy that has made our youth of today distrust our political, business, religious, and educational leadership. To the youth's mind, the end does not justify the means if, in the process of attaining the end, the means used tend to destroy that intangible something we call soul or spiritual life and, thus, obscure our sense of perception. To make matters worse, even many of our religious leaders seem to have no compunction of conscience in accepting tainted money whenever they can get their hands on it, presumably for the noble purpose of building monuments of our faith in God. Yet, they naively wonder why the youth of today is slowly but steadily losing its faith in their leadership. These leaders, too, are forgetting the simple fact that truth, like Christianity, has no compromise even tho its pedlers have prostituted it and have placed it on a mercenary basis. Most newspapers, of course, follow this utilitarian philosophy, often under the pretext that they want to give opportunity to both sides in presenting their cases, but, in reality, for the money they get out of it. After all, they maintain, *pecunia non olet!*

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### QUISLINGISM: THE NEGRO'S GREATEST ENEMY

Let us now take some really serious cases of materialistic journalism where the profit motive is such a dominant factor and where service to one's own race so completely forgotten that quite often the net result is actual disservice or harm to the race.

Harping on the theme that a fourth term for Roosevelt would mean the ending of the two party system, the *Pittsburgh Courier* wrote editorially on its front page in bold type as follows:

POWER LEADS TO TYRANNY. The Negro needs only to guess at what his position would be under a one-party system. Look at Germany! Look at Italy! Look at the South! All are the results of the one-party system. Italy is gone, Germany is doomed. The South is America's poorhouse: Poor hospitals, the poorest schools, the poorest social conditions and the lowest wages. Whatever tends to destroy the two-party system in this country is dangerous for the Negro.<sup>11</sup>

One thing is certain. The Negro Press has copied well the Machiavellian art of effective writing from the "yellow" press, the curse of American journalism—the curse which permits its adherents to turn freedom of speech and press into license. "Drink Dr. Pepper, boys and girls, at 10, 2, and 4" says a business man's mouth-piece even tho such a concoction can do no good to any

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<sup>11</sup>*Pittsburgh Courier*, September 30, 1944, p. 1.

*AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)*

youngster's health. "Smoke Camels for your nerves," comes in the soothing and almost beseeching voice of another mouthpiece even tho it is universally admitted



that a stimulant like tobacco increases one's nervousness in the long run even if it may temporarily have the opposite effect. Athletic directors almost uniformly forbid the use of tobacco and colas and other stimulants when they

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want their teams to remain in one hundred per cent shape. "Use Dremal Shampoo for falling hair," assures the radio voice of a third mouthpiece who himself, so the story goes, is bald-headed. The art of supersalesmanship has made many a family buy things beyond its means as well as its needs, but, what is worse, buy things which are both individually as well as socially undesirable and harmful, and the desire for which is created by misleading, and often untruthful, advertisements.

Discussing racial conflicts in the United States under the editorial caption, "The New Deal and Riots," this same widely-read, seventeen - different - region - edition newspaper, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, asserted two weeks later, à la Hearst style, "that such [racial] conflicts may take place after the war is not unlikely, and if they do, the responsibility for them can be placed squarely at the door of the New Deal, because this administration's [Roosevelt's] policies lead directly to racial conflict and have been responsible for them in the past."<sup>12</sup>

The article then went on to cite instances of racial conflicts all over the United States, including the Detroit riots and the killings and beatings of Negro soldiers in the South, and ended in blandly placing all the blame for these conflicts on President Roosevelt. A Bilbo could not have written a better anti-Roosevelt and anti-New Deal article using also the Bilbo logic! Let an intelligent

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<sup>12</sup>*Pittsburgh Courier*, October 14, 1944, p. 6.

## AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)

teen-age girl express her reactions in her own words to the editorials and other writings in the *Pittsburgh Courier* appearing during the last six weeks' presidential campaign of 1944:

Speaking from a purely non-partisan standpoint, such statements as made in the *Courier* against President Roosevelt and his administration should be discounted by the intelligent and discriminating reader, as mere contravention designed to fill the narrow minds of the crowd with seeds of hatred and malice. Of course, anyone can see the injustice being meted out to those of Negro blood in all phases of social life! Yet, to place the responsibility for this situation solely on President Roosevelt and his administration is a mistake.

To say that the president has passively contributed to these situations thru failure to do anything about them comes closer to the truth. But he could not plant the murderous and baneful seeds of racial hatred so deeply into the hearts of men from the South and also the North. These feelings of racial animosity have almost been institutionalized so that they are common and learned patterns of responses of whites against those of Negroid blood.<sup>13</sup>

It is not the author's contention that President Roosevelt was above criticism. What he strongly objects to is the

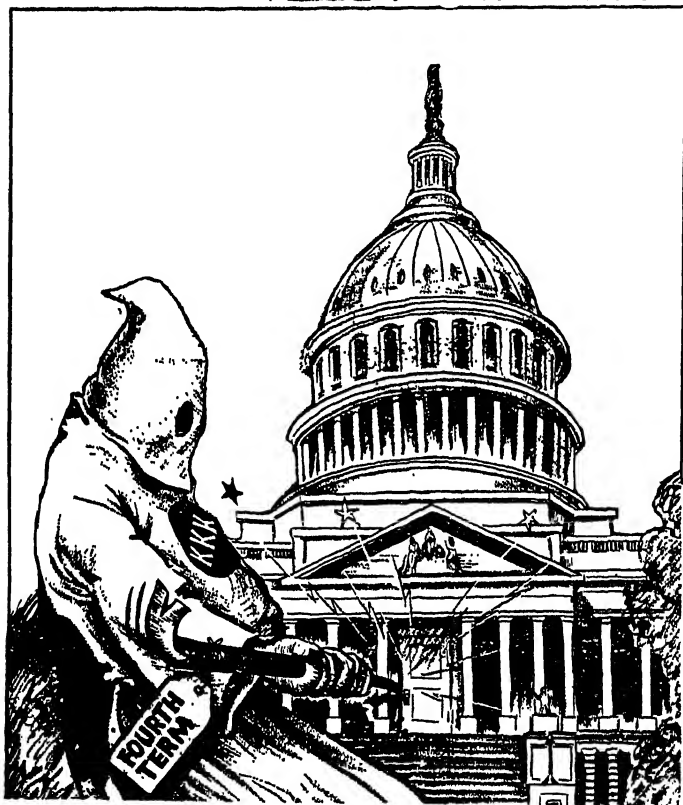
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<sup>13</sup>Irma Clark in a term paper on "A sociological study of the *Pittsburgh Courier* published during the last six weeks of the 1944 presidential campaign," written as partial requirement in the course on "General Sociology" given by the author at Wilberforce University in 1944-1945.

THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

CAN WE AFFORD TO DO THIS?

Pittsburgh Courier  
November 4, 1944



stooping to the use of unfair and sensational methods to gain one's end. Whatever one might think of Roosevelt's domestic and international policy, even his worst enemies

## AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)

have often conceded that he was undoubtedly the friend of the underdog, including the Negro. To vilify him by cartoons and treat him as if he were a Ku Kluxer is the unkindest cut one could ever give to one's friend. Even the conservative *New York Times*, so prone to be imperialistic and dogmatic, credited Roosevelt for "having recognized minority groups, their rights and privileges, especially those of the Negro."<sup>14</sup>

J. A. Rogers' assertion<sup>15</sup> that "the Negroes are turning away from the Democratic party because they see the awful control the South wielded over their interests strikes me as a misrepresentation of facts," continues this keen-minded teen-age girl.

He [Rogers] seems to give the impression that the Democrats and Republicans have adopted a strict policy of discrimination and liberality respectively in regard to the Negro. This impression is fallacious because each party adopts policies of this sort only when it is to its advantage politically. If they find that giving a few Negroes jobs or releasing a few occupations for Negroes will help them in their campaign, they will do this. But if they see that they will gain more by kicking the Negro around and keeping him out of good jobs, they will do this just as readily. The fact that some Negroes are again swinging over to the Republican party does not mean that they actually think that this step will miraculously

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<sup>14</sup>*New York Times*, Editorial, October, 1944.

<sup>15</sup>*Pittsburgh Courier*, October 21, 1944, p. 7.



## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

dissolve all forms of racial discrimination, but it merely illustrates the human tendency to have hope or faith in a change."<sup>16</sup>

"A straight Republican ticket is the strongest and the most intelligent protest against racial discrimination and indignities," avowed the *Pittsburgh Courier* in another editorial<sup>17</sup> titled, "New Deal's 'Roll of Shame.' " Discussing this editorial, the same student makes these wise comments:

Imagine telling a reading public, supposedly intelligent, to vote a straight ticket! The Negro, if anyone, should be more discriminating about everybody elected to any office of authority in which he may wield control over the cherished ideals and aspirations of his people and whose influence may be felt for years. Many disappointments have been felt by the Negro when after many promises of a Utopia of social living he was again forced into the role of a slave or an utter wretch. Why then, when he is given the chance to place a man in office who will at least give him some form of liberality, should he hand over his only claim to being a citizen by indiscriminately voting a straight ticket? Even the much-abused Political Action Committee created by the more progressive and dynamic labor organization, the CIO, did not advocate the voting of a straight ticket!"<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Clark, *op. cit.*

<sup>17</sup>*Pittsburgh Courier*, November 4, 1944, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup>Clark, *op. cit.*

Front Page, Pittsburgh Courier, Nov. 4, '44

## New Deal's 'Roll Of Shame'

President Roosevelt is Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. armed forces. Under war-time exigencies, he has the extraordinary power to end segregation and discrimination in all branches of the armed services.

Below, The Pittsburgh Courier is publishing a list of some of the Negro boys IN UNIFORM who have met death . . . NOT KILLED IN ACTION FOR THEIR COUNTRY, but MURDERED by their country. They paid the supreme sacrifice on the Altar of Dixie prejudice and our COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF has not only said nothing . . . HE HAS DONE NOTHING.

### HERE IS THE "ROLL OF SHAME":

**PVT. ROBERT SPECELY,**

killed by white bus driver in Durham, N. C.

**SGT. WELLINGTON D. ABRAMS,**

shot by white MPs at Brookley Field, Ala.

**PVT. THEODORE SAMUELS,**

fatally wounded by Mobile, Ala., policeman.

**PVT. RAYMOND McMURAY,**

murdered by Gadsden, Ala., police officers.

**PVT. RAIF G. WILLIAMS,**

killed by Little Rock, Ark., deputy sheriff.

**PVT. TYREE JACKSON,**

shot to death by military guard, San Antonio, Texas.

**SGT. THOMAS P. FOSTER,**

slain by civilian police, Little Rock, Ark.

**PVT. ALLEN COX,**

shot to death by white woman near Kisatchie, La.

**TEN SOLDIERS,**

killed by civilian and military police during "Night of Terror" riot at Alexandria, La.

**PVT. RAYMOND CARR,**

killed by State policemen at Alexandria, La.

**UN-NAMED SOLDIER,**

killed by sheriff at Centreville, Miss.

**PVT. HENRY WILLIAMS,**

slain by white bus driver at Mobile, Ala.

**SGT. GILBERT WAGONER,**

shot by civilian police at Tampa, Fla.

**PVT. HERMAN HANKINS,**

fatally shot by MP at Camp Tyson, Tenn.

**PVT. LAWRENCE BAILEY,**

killed by policeman at Pine Bluff, Ark.

**PVT. POYD BRYANT,**

mysteriously shot near Trenton, S. C.

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The *Afro-American*, another of the four big papers with the second largest circulation among Negro newspapers, and the *New York Amsterdam News* were also as malicious and vicious and illogical as the *Pittsburgh Courier* in their attacks on Roosevelt and his administration. Says another student, after reading the issues of the *Afro-American* during the 1944 presidential election:

The *Afro* has used every trick and trade in journalism to discredit Roosevelt. . . . By mentioning the name of Bilbo and the possibility of his becoming president some day for as long as sixteen years or more if we now allowed Roosevelt to become president for the fourth term, the editor attempted to throw a scare into the minds of the people. . . . The *Afro* portrays the Republican party as having views synonymous with those of the late Wendell L. Wilkie. Any intelligent man knows that this is not so.<sup>19</sup>

The long quotations above, few of the many that were written in the same strain, are given here as clear signs of hope in our youth of today—signs which indicate that the youth is doing its own thinking and that neither the *Courier* nor the *Afro-American* nor the *Amsterdam News*, all of which were villifying Roosevelt, seem to have

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<sup>19</sup>Walter Crider in a term paper on "A sociological study of the *Afro-American* published during the last six weeks of the 1944 presidential campaign," written as a partial requirement in the course on "General Sociology" given by the author at Wilberforce University in 1944-1945.

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been able to influence public opinion very much in certain matters, in spite of their large circulation. The reader should not get the impression that these three were the



only papers which went all-out anti-Roosevelt in this Republican campaign against the New Deal. The general line-up of some of the important Negro newspapers printed near and above the Mason-Dixon line, either as pro-Roosevelt or anti-Roosevelt papers during the 1944 presidential election, is given below.

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

### PRO-ROOSEVELT

*Chicago Defender*  
*People's Voice*  
*Journal and Guide*  
*New York Age*  
*Los Angeles Sentinel*  
*St. Louis Argus*  
*California Eagle*  
*Ohio State News*  
*Washington Tribune*  
*Michigan Chronicle*  
*Louisville Defender*

### ANTI-ROOSEVELT

*Pittsburgh Courier*  
*Amsterdam Star News\**  
*Afro-American*  
*Kansas City Call*  
*Cleveland Call and Post*  
*Philadelphia Tribune*  
*Philadelphia Independent*  
*Chicago World*  
*St. Louis American*

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\*Now *Amsterdam News*

The word anti-Roosevelt rather than pro-Dewey is used here advisedly. A careful study of the Republican presidential campaign indicated that most of its effort was spent in discrediting and denouncing Roosevelt and the New Deal instead of building up Dewey and the millennium he was expected to bring in our domestic economy. Commenting on this Quislingism, the Negro's greatest internal enemy, Conrad<sup>20</sup> makes the following pertinent observations:

It is the Democratic and Republican Parties which bear the first responsibility for such "deal." They deduce it is

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<sup>20</sup>Earl Conrad, *Jim Crow America*, New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1947, p. 79.

## AN EVALUATION (UNFAVORABLE)

cheaper to buy the Negro press than to pass progressive minority legislation. Also, when they pay off the Negro papers they feel that their obligation is largely taken care of and they don't have to worry; with the Negro publishers and chief editors involved in guilt the major parties can ignore much of the year-round pressure which the Negro press exerts. What this process amounts to, finally, is another form of supremacist control of the Negro group.

### FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Further evidence of how well Negro newspapers are copying white ones in the suppression of ideas contrary to their own, real or alleged, and how these champions of freedom often are ready to destroy free thought is seen in the following actions of some newspapers during the 1944 Presidential election as reported by the Negro magazine, *Headlines*, later known as *Headlines and Pictures*, and finally ceasing publication in 1946.

Several nationally known Negro columnists broke with their publishers over their political differences. Erudite Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois resigned from the *New York Amsterdam Star News* which paced all Negro papers in support of Dewey and Bricker. Horace Clayton of Chicago found his copy omitted in the *Pittsburgh Courier* which backed the Republicans. Roy Wilkins continued to receive his check but his copy did not appear in the *Amsterdam Star News*. . . .

White House Correspondent Harry McAlpin was censured by Republican publishers who subscribe to the NNPA

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

news service for giving too much copy about President Roosevelt. Harry replied that he was assigned to cover the White House and until Dewey got there it would be reasonable to expect that most of the copy would center around President Roosevelt, the present occupant.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>*Headlines*, December, 1944, pp. 23-24.

## How the Negro Newspaper Functions

THE FOLLOWING PART of the study of Negro newspapers is limited to the consideration of number, circulation, and subscription rates; publishing establishments and mechanical features; and labor and wage policies. The observations are based primarily upon a careful examination of sixty-six Negro newspapers chosen on the basis of geographical and population distribution. The newspapers marked with an asterisk in the directory of newspapers given in Appendix II are the sixty-six newspapers that were chosen for this study.

Credit for a large portion of this section of the chapter is due to Professor John Syrjamaki of Yale University who kindly granted the author permission to use the statistical data gathered in his own study of the "Negro Press in 1938," referred to in Chapter 3. Professor Syrjamaki's study was taken as an excellent model for a further study of the same subject which included sixty-six papers



## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

instead of sixty-one. In this way, all statistical material and conclusions were brought to January, 1948.

### NUMBER AND CIRCULATION

The Negro Press is represented in thirty-six states and the District of Columbia. The only states not having any representation are the following twelve: Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Maine, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming. With the exception of Delaware, the states not having Negro newspaper representation have a sparse Negro population and are either Northern or Western states. Delaware has a college paper, but it cannot be properly classified as a newspaper in the sense in which the word is used in this book. West Virginia's only so-called newspaper, the *Star Journal*, is really a monthly magazine. This state, therefore, does not have a newspaper in the real sense of that word. It has, however, another important magazine called *Color* which deals with Negro life and has a substantial circulation of 110,000. For this reason, West Virginia has been included among the states having Negro Press representation.

In June 1945, there were, according to the Bureau of the Census, 110 general newspapers, 45 religious, college, advertising, fraternal, and other miscellaneous papers, and 100 magazines and bulletins, making a grand total of

## HOW THE NEWSPAPER FUNCTIONS

255 Negro periodicals.<sup>1</sup> Adding to this number the names of other periodicals listed in Ayer's *Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*,<sup>2</sup> the International Year Book Number of the *Editor and Publisher—The Fourth Estate*,<sup>3</sup> the *Negro Handbook*,<sup>4</sup> the *Negro Year Book*,<sup>5</sup> and the author's own files, and omitting those which have ceased publication for one reason or another, there were, at the beginning of 1948, a total of 169 newspapers, 56

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<sup>1</sup>*Negro Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States: 1945*, Bureau of the Census, Negro Statistical Bulletin No. 1, Washington, D.C., August 29, 1946. This directory lists all the different state editions of the *Afro-American* separately. Since a very large portion of the news and national advertising in all the *Afro* editions are identical, there seems to be no sound justification for listing each edition separately without following the same procedure with reference to the different state editions of the *Courier* and the *Journal Guide*. Nevertheless, each *Afro* edition has been counted as a separate newspaper in this discussion.

<sup>2</sup>*Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, 1948*, Philadelphia: N. W. Ayer & Sons, Inc., 1948.

<sup>3</sup>International Year Book Number, 1948 (Section on Negro Periodicals in the United States), *Editor and Publisher*, January, 1948.

<sup>4</sup>*Negro Handbook, 1946-47*, New York: Current Books, Inc., 1947, pp. 237-250; also similar sections in previous issues.

<sup>5</sup>*Negro Year Book* (Chapter 16), Tuskegee Institute: Department of Research and Records, 1947, pp. 383-404; also similar chapters in previous issues.

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college campus publications of all types, and over 100 religious, fraternal, general, and other papers, bulletins, and magazines. This gives us a total of over 325 periodicals of all types.

Of the 169 newspapers reporting information on the frequency of publication, 3 were semi-monthlies or bi-weeklies, 159 weeklies, 5 semi-weeklies, and 2 dailies, with a total circulation of over two million (2,120,000). Of this total, a little over one million (1,007,500) comprised the Audit Bureau of Circulations figures totaling 19 newspapers. The circulation figures of the remaining 150 newspapers were either estimates of publishers or their sworn statements, or were secured from figures released by advertising representatives of publishers.

The Second World War undoubtedly stimulated great interest of the Negro in his press and the comparatively comfortable increase in his earning power made it possible for him to translate this interest in supporting his race papers. It is, therefore, very easy to understand the rapid increase in the circulation of Negro newspapers from a little over one million in 1937 to more than two million in 1947, an increase of almost one hundred per cent.

Mere circulation figures, of course, do not give one the actual number of the reading public. Quite often, one paper is read by several persons. On the other hand, a small number of persons in the better-income group buy at least two papers: one, a local Negro paper, and the

## HOW THE NEWSPAPER FUNCTIONS

other, a national Negro paper. On a conservative estimate it would be safe to assume that out of the nine and one-fourth million Negroes who are fourteen years of age and over, close to five million read some Negro newspaper each week.

Of the 169 newspapers, 85 were published in the South where three-fourths of the total Negro population resides, 66 in the North, and the remaining 18 in the West. The total circulation of the Southern papers was less than forty per cent of the total; that of the Northern papers was more than fifty-six per cent of the total and close to one and one-half times as much as that of Southern papers. One might be tempted to draw the conclusion from the larger circulation of Northern papers that the Northern Negro might be vastly more literate, that he might have a greater love for reading, and that he must be more race conscious than his Southern brother. One might also be led to believe that almost every other Northern Negro, be he young or old, child or adult, was a purchaser of some Negro newspaper since there were but a little over three million Negroes in the North with a total circulation of one and one quarter million Negro papers each week.

A more factual explanation of this larger circulation of Northern papers is that owing to their better news coverage and their generally fearless editorial policies they are in great demand in the South. The *Chicago De-*

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

*fender*, for example, had a local circulation of only 62,300 as against non-local or national circulation of 131,600 during the six months ending September 30, 1947. This means that over two-thirds of its circulation was national. Over 66 per cent of this national circulation, however, was in the South.

The four leading newspapers with their total audited circulation of over four-fifths of a million (812,700) as of September, 1947, are:

<i>Pittsburgh Courier</i> (all editions)	277,900
<i>Afro-American</i> (all editions)	235,600
<i>Chicago Defender</i> (both editions)	193,900
<i>Amsterdam News</i> (weekly total)	105,300

Ohio has the largest number of Negro newspapers if one were to include the three editions of the *Pittsburgh Courier* (Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Ohio) as separate papers. These three editions had a total circulation of over 20,000, which is more than any other Ohio paper except the *Cleveland Call and Post*. This gives Ohio a total of fourteen newspapers. California has the second largest number of papers (twelve) since 1947, and Florida and Texas come next with eleven papers.

Distribution of newspapers is done by mail and thru news-stands in large cities. In recent years, many railroad news-stands have been carrying nationally-known periodicals. There is, however, at least one distributing agency

## HOW THE NEWSPAPER FUNCTIONS

owned and operated by Negroes. On January 1, 1938, the Great Eastern News Corporation was established by Leroy Brannic in New York City as a newspaper distribution agency, with the *People's Voice* as its first customer.<sup>6</sup> By 1945, it had obtained fourteen Negro publications and one white, giving the corporation a total circulation of 500,000 a week.

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

No more than a mere handful of Negro papers have built a sufficient volume of advertising to secure any important source of income from it. The volume of revenue derived from job-shop printing enjoyed by Negro newspapers is also very small. As a result, in most cases, a substantial financial burden of the Negro Press tends to fall largely upon circulation income which is considerable. The average price of the better class papers on a subscription basis varies from four to five dollars a year and for other papers from two to three dollars a year. On a retail basis, these papers generally sell for between ten and twelve cents a copy for most large city papers, and five to seven cents for others. The racial nature of the Negro newspaper makes its sale possible at such a comparatively high price even tho the average size of the

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<sup>6</sup>Walter H. Hollins, *The Negro Press in America: A content analysis of five newspapers*, (Master's thesis at the University of Minnesota), June, 1945, p. 34.

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paper has been reduced considerably since the Second World War. Generally, however, these papers are again gradually going back to their previous pre-war size.

### **PUBLISHING ESTABLISHMENTS**

Information on business circumstances of the Negro Press is virtually impossible to secure. It can be surmised only from an occasional news item and from a cross sectional analysis of Negro papers. Mr. G. James Fleming estimated in 1935 that the Negro Press represented an evaluation of over \$3,000,000 and gave whole or part time employment to about 6,000. Presuming this figure to be fairly accurate, it would appear that the rapid stride made by the Negro Press in the last thirteen years and the present high cost of material ought to bring the total evaluation to a figure close to \$10,000,000 and total part and full time employment nearing 10,000.

The business and printing structure have not kept stride with the development of news functions in the Negro Press. A study of sixty-six representative newspapers revealed that, with the exception of a dozen papers, most of them are typographically inferior, even tho, in many cases, they are well edited. While an assortment of type faces is used for headlines and advertising displays, the quality of printing and typographical arrangement is so poorly done that they often look unattractive. An unbalanced and overcrowded appearance with pictures care-

## HOW THE NEWSPAPER FUNCTIONS

lessly scattered everywhere seems to be the rule. A few papers have shown remarkable improvement in this respect in recent years. The *People's Voice*, during its first year of publication when it was fashioned after the *P.M.* newspaper and printed in *P.M.*'s plant, and the *Journal and Guide* have been among the leaders which presented an attractive display of type and balanced arrangement. The *Chicago Sunday Bee* also had a balanced arrangement, but the quality of the printing was poor. It was edited for several years by Miss Olive M. Diggs, a capable, young, college graduate, and often carried editorials of very high caliber. It never catered to sensationalism during the life time of its publisher. In late 1946 and soon after the death of its founder and publisher, Anthony Overton, a successful business man of excellent reputation, the *Bee* made a futile attempt to survive and changed its format to a tabloid size, but within a few months after that it ceased publication in the latter half of 1947. The loss of this newspaper has been a distinct blow to high class journalism.

Inking and press work of most newspapers with small circulation are inferior. Evidence of second hand or worn-out presses is apparent in the appearance of many papers. Line cuts are used generously by even the poorest papers in contrast with the number used by white dailies, but only a few of the more affluent papers can afford the use of better grade halftones. Generally, neither the line cuts



## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

nor the halftones, however, appear well in print except in a few leading papers, suggesting again the use of inferior presses and of poor engraving in the case of halftones.<sup>7</sup> Probably the great majority of small Negro papers are issued from unpretentious side-street shops having second hand or inadequate equipment, generally including a flat bed cylinder press, one linotype, a casting box, a job press or two, and limited fonts of display type.

There is, however, a pronounced evidence toward better plants and equipment. Periodic mention of newspapers that have moved into new specially constructed buildings appear in issues of the Negro Press. The *Afro-American*, the *Black Dispatch*, the *Chicago Defender*, the *Cleveland Call and Post*, the *Houston Informer*, the *Kansas City Call*, the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, and the *St. Louis Argus* are among those which have modern rotary presses.

Printers and pressmen on Negro papers are now Negroes, trained either by practical experience or in industrial schools. What difficulties Negro publishers have to face can easily be surmised from the editorial comments of the *California Eagle* made only a little over ten years ago in its 1937 Thanksgiving issue:

Most of our printers we had to make; not out of materials with backgrounds of experience in the printing profession,

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<sup>7</sup>Syrjamaki, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

## HOW THE NEWSPAPER FUNCTIONS

but from the rank and file—those who have been denied opportunities. A number of the printers and operators employed by the *Eagle* today learned their profession in our shop. Many of them were just ambitious little tykes with great zeal and little else when they came . . . asking for a break. Time and again our machines have been damaged by youngsters gaining their first mechanical experience.

## WAGE AND LABOR POLICIES

While direct information on salaries and wage schedules of the Negro Press are difficult to secure, its lack of business stability, as evidenced by large casualties in the thirties and early forties, and its inadequate income from advertising and job-shop revenues tend to suggest that minimum rather than maximum levels probably prevail. Indicative of the growing professionalization of Negro journalists is the fact that staff members of the *New York Amsterdam News* joined the New York Newspaper Guild<sup>8</sup> in 1936. When the publishers of that paper refused to cede to the demands of the local guild, its members went on strike and were fully supported by the white guild. After eleven weeks, the owners went bankrupt, and the new publishers signed an agreement with the local guild.

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<sup>8</sup>This guild affiliation is only a sort of half unionization since Negro typesetters and mechanics are still generally barred from most ITU locals.

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

As a further evidence of the growing strength and manhood of staff members of some Negro newspapers—strength and manhood made possible by unionization—one finds this curious line-up in the 1944 Presidential election: While the publishers of the *New York Amsterdam News* went all-out Republican, urging and coaxing their readers by writing anti-Roosevelt editorials of the meanest type and urging them to vote for Dewey, the staff members of this paper urged their co-workers thru their own trade union paper to vote for Roosevelt.

Staff members of the *People's Voice* joined the American Newspaper Guild, an affiliate of the CIO in 1944. In 1945, staff members of the *Chicago Defender* and the *Los Angeles Sentinel* also joined the American Newspaper Guild—a forward step indeed. A year later, the staff members of the *Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Washington Afro-American* joined the Guild. Probably two or three more have joined the Guild since then, but, by and large, most staff workers in the Negro Press are not members of any trade union, partly because the average Negro newspaper is still run as a small individual business enterprise where personal relationship plays an important part and partly because the Negro capitalist is no different from any other capitalist whose main objective is to amass a fortune, often calling this objective by the euphemistic phrase of “enlightened self-interest.” As a result, the Negro capitalist has almost always frowned upon

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unionism in his own plant while advocating it elsewhere.

In November, 1947, the International Typographical Union in Chicago went on strike for \$100-a-week pay, and the daily papers of that "windy city" were being printed by the unique process of photo-engraved zinc cuts made from typewritten copies with handset headlines. While the *Chicago Defender* was preoccupied with court litigation, it acceded to the Union's demand, but as soon as the court fight, arising out of the will of the late Robert S. Abbott, was over in late December, the *Defender* declined to continue complying with the Union's demand of \$100-a-week pay for its workers.

John H. Sengstacke, general manager of the *Chicago Defender*, answered the Union's demand with the following statement that hits directly at the very weakness of the Negro's attempt in building a segregated economy within the fabric of national economy—a national economy that is built upon the tacit acceptance of the Negro's economic, political, and social segregation as a matter of course. The statement, clear and concise as it is, raises some pertinent questions. Pointing out that the available resources of the *Chicago Defender* could not support the wage demands made by the Union, Sengstacke appealed to the strikers to keep in mind the following facts:

Our resources are limited and we must depend upon the Negro population only for income to survive.

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As a Negro newspaper we are circumscribed by all the business limitations imposed upon our race.

Because of this fact, we are restricted in securing advertising.

Because of this fact, we are restricted in circulation growth.

Because of this fact, we are restricted in purchasing newsprint, new presses, and the necessary tools to operate.

Because of this fact, we are restricted in securing bank credits, loans, etc.

Because of this fact, our Negro stereotypers and pressmen are not admitted into their respective unions and generally are restricted to work in establishments operated by Negroes.

We cannot get away from these facts because they are facts.

All Negro workers, too, must also remember that these facts confront all Negroes regardless of their religion, union, political and other affiliations.

. . . The other Negro newspapers in America, we believe, should understand our problem and appreciate that recent events more and more are conspiring to put Negro newspapers out of business. If this comes to pass the Negro's strongest weapon in his struggle for first class citizenship will have been destroyed.

While the author sees clearly the logic of Mr. Sengstacke's appeal, which undoubtedly deserves the serious attention of all labor leaders, it seems rather strange and highly far-fetched to compare this International Typographical Union with the Ku Klux Klan, as the ultra-conservative *Journal and Guide* did in its two-full-length-

## HOW THE NEWSPAPER FUNCTIONS

column editorial titled, "The Use of Negroes as Labor's Pawns," dated December 20, 1947. Declaring rightfully that the closed shop has so far proven to be the Negro's enemy, the *Journal* made the following remarks, part of which are italicized by the author for emphasis:

It should not require an economist to see the logic and the cold, practical sense in the argument which Mr. Sengstacke makes. Unless that lesson is learned well, Negro newspaper workers all over the country will find themselves being used as pawns, destroying the only means of employment in the printing trades and newspaper profession available to them, in a foolish and suicidal gesture of cooperation with white newspaper workers who have done—and are continuing even today to do—everything possible to keep them from qualifying and obtaining jobs in white newspaper plants.

A great many of our leaders have embraced without question the entire dogma of the professional unionists. It is not strange, therefore, that a majority of Negroes are sympathetic with the efforts of the typographical union and other labor organizations to defy and nullify the TAFT-HARTLEY law.

But we cannot hold these views and we cannot enter into this fight without shaking the very pillars of constitutional government by which we have been able to establish and to hold the fundamental rights of American citizens.

*If we encourage an international labor union to defy and vitiate the TAFT-HARTLEY law because it does not agree with it, although it is the law of the land, then we cannot consistently take a different position when another group, the KU KLUX KLAN, for instance, defies and nullifies a civil rights*

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

*law simply because it does not like it or does not believe it should be the law.*

This comparison of the International Typographical Union with the Ku Klux Klan only indicates the anti-labor attitude of this paper, which, of course, has many bed-fellows. While fighting for the Negro's right to be recognized as a full citizen of these United States, many newspapers are, at heart, believers in the old *laissez faire* doctrine which made slavery and child labor possible in this country even after other progressive nations had abandoned them!

The author has no intention of denying the historical fact that closed unions have prevented Negroes from gaining entrance in skilled and specialized labor jobs in the past, as the *Journal and Guide* so aptly pointed out in the same editorial. It is, nevertheless, equally true that labor unions in the last ten years, particularly those organized under the CIO, have, perhaps, done more for the uplift of Negro labor and Negroes' civil rights than the helpless outcries of the Negro Press. One should not overlook the fact that the general *trend* in the policies of the more progressive as well as aggressive unions has been definitely toward recognizing the Negro's right to skilled jobs and his right to join craft unions.

The author's serious objection, however, to comparing labor unions with the Ku Klux Klan lies in the fact that

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a labor union works within the framework of all laws and of the state and federal constitutions. Furthermore, labor unions do not adopt the tactics of secrecy, hooded meetings, intimidation, threat, and violence so consistently used by the Klan. Another striking difference is that the unions try to build class solidarity without distinction of color, creed, or sex, which certainly is a far broader classification than the race purity and race solidarity conceptions of Hitler followed by the Klan—conceptions which have invariably ended in creating race hatred and race riots. If one must attack the aggressive nature of labor unions and their tactics of getting around the laws without violating them, as they evidently are doing now, one must admit that they learned these tactics from their employers who have been past-masters in evading laws they disliked, using all the legal talent that their money could buy to do so. As a result, the employers have succeeded in creating a new class of super lawyers, known by the special title of “corporation lawyers,” whose only job is to show their patrons, for a high price, of course, how to get around or beat laws without being caught by them. Even a casual study of the development of our present employers’ liability laws will show numerous illustrations of how employers have always used all means within their power to evade their legal responsibilities even when such evasion was socially and ethically unjustifiable though legally possible.



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The latest evidence of the anti-labor attitude of the Negro Press as a whole was manifested at the eighth annual convention of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association held in Detroit in June, 1947, when that august body, by a strong vote, urged Senator Robert Taft to bend every effort to have President Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley labor bill overridden. The defense of the publishers for this action was that the bill contained an FEPC clause providing non-discrimination in the selection of membership.

## News Coverage and General Make-Up

A STUDY OF SIXTY-SIX papers showed competent news writing and editing. Since 1920, there has been a steady drift to the Negro Press of young college graduates who often have specialized training. As a result, some newspapers have been able to approach the professional standards of white papers and to achieve a creditable impersonality in their writings. The *Norfolk Journal and Guide* and the *Kansas City Call*, to name but two, state that they employ as heads of their principal departments only graduates of professional schools of journalism.

Personal opinions and prejudices have disappeared markedly from news articles of several important weeklies, except as noted later in this section. Articles and columns furnished by the news services are particularly outstanding, while reporters on some of the leading newspapers could competently fill jobs on white city dailies. In fact, since the Second World War a growing number

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of Negro reporters are serving as regular workers on such well-reputed white papers as the *New York Evening Post*, the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald-Tribune*, the *P.M.*, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, the *Chicago Daily News*, the *Chicago Herald-American*, the *Chicago Sun*, the *Toledo Blade*, the *Akron Beacon-Journal*, and the *Detroit Free Press*.<sup>1</sup> In most of these cases, however, these workers are assigned to write news touching Negro life only.

Selection of news seems often very poor. Negro journalists appear to have learned the technique of writing and editing news without making equal progress in finding news, a process which requires a larger financial outlay. These newspapers have tended to deal almost completely with the quirks and oddities of personalities. The news covered is often of the obvious type, following patterns of common gossip. To the well-informed reader, many of these newspapers often become somewhat dull and disappointing after the initial novelty wears off. Institutional news is strikingly lacking and only a few leading papers espouse local causes. The *New York Amsterdam News* and the *People's Voice* do cover local news rather commendably, possibly because they are published in a city having a large Negro population and also because they do not try to capture a nation-wide market by

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<sup>1</sup>*Negro Year Book*, 1947, pp. 395-396.

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issuing national editions as do the other larger papers mentioned below.

From the point of view of coverage of national news about the Negro, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Afro-American*, the *Chicago Defender*, and the *Journal and Guide* are the first four leading weeklies. How much emphasis these papers give to national news and national circulation can be gathered from the fact that the *Pittsburgh Courier* publishes seventeen different editions: Local, Pacific Coast, Louisiana, Florida, Texas, Far South, South National, New York, Washington (D.C.), Philadelphia, Ohio, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, and Mid-West; the *Chicago Defender*, two: Local and National, and two affiliates: the *Michigan Chronicle* and the *Louisville Defender*; the *Journal and Guide*, four: Local (Norfolk), National, Richmond, and Newport News. The national edition of each of the above-named papers is meant to circulate in every state where that particular newspaper does not have a state edition nor an affiliated paper in that state or section.

The *Scott Newspaper Syndicate*, which invaded the Negro press field on a wide scale during the depression, publishes the *Atlanta Daily World*. It also controls twelve other papers which are printed in whole or in part in the offices of the *Atlanta World*, thus effecting an economy in production costs and permitting the use of up-to-date shop equipment. At the same time, these very things com-

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pel excessive uniformity and minimize the importance of local news in various papers of the syndicate. Possibly, that may partly account for their meager combined circulation of only 70,000. Other syndicates controlling a group of papers are: the *Birmingham Weekly Review Group* controlling seven papers; the *Wolverine Group*, four; the *Atlas-Power Group*, five; and the *Informer Group*, four.

By and large, leading Negro newspapers serve a wider area than their immediate localities; hence, their selection of news is state, national, and international rather than local. As a result, local news is often sadly neglected by such papers. In a large number of newspapers, however, national news appears scattered thruout the papers instead of appearing on a few select pages. Furthermore, this news is often culled from press services or clipped from other papers and used in part for filler purposes. Syndicated columns seem to be printed sometimes for this reason. This indicates, in part, an inability or lack of effort on the part of newspapers to cover the local field adequately.

In the selection of the news, particular emphasis is naturally placed on successes made by Negroes in competition with whites. News of Negro churches and lodges, certainly among the highest developed institutions in "Negro culture," tends generally to tell only of elections, social announcements, and other trivial details of no serious news value. Frequently, even this trivial news

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appears from one to three weeks after its occurrence. Quite often, such news is very poorly written.

Negro schools and colleges also supply their own news written quite often in the style of society news with utter disregard to its value as "news." Attempts at improvement of the content and in the general tone of this news are often frowned upon by the administrative officers of the institutions who seem to be guided solely by the desire to compete against other institutions for newspaper space. To get more space in newspapers and to remain in their good graces, some educational institutions buy so-called legitimate advertising in which they announce the opening dates of their institutions. A few newspapers make a practice of collecting additional assessments in return for their espousal of the institution's cause.

Except in the case of about a dozen papers, prominent either because of their full treatment of local news or of national news, editorial columns in most newspapers do not rise much above the pattern of news writing discussed above. Only in the syndicated columns does one find articles attempting to deal with the more fundamental problems confronting Negroes. This lack of institutional news may be reflective of the fact that "Negro culture" is only partly on its way to maturity. Such news cannot be written if it does not exist, if no serious attempts are made to gather it, or if there is no demand for it. The impression gained from a careful study of outstanding

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newspapers, however, is that the main fault lies with Negro journalists. They have aped the white papers too sedulously and have placed undue emphasis upon personalities and sensationalism in order to sell their issues.<sup>2</sup> In so doing, they have often completely ignored the opportunity of educating the public and thus elevating its tastes. Possibly, they believe that their main job is to give the public what it wants, or, rather, to give the public what they think it wants.

The Negro papers are not unlike white papers in their appearance. In general, they run in the direction of more sensationalism, a feature stemming from the initial enterprise of the *Chicago Defender* and the *Afro-American* which built themselves in the image of the Hearst papers. The contents of the Negro papers include collectively the usual treatment of news, robberies, murders and scandals, society and personal items, sports, dramas and theater, syndicated columns, letters to the lovelorn, Winchellian columns, comic strips in white or shade, newspaper verse, the inquiring reporter, beauty hints, recipes for the homemaker, advice on how to bring up children; serial stories, and astrological and "lucky number" columns. Some newspapers of even the better caliber like the *Courier* have been exploiting, until recently, this last phase of putting the so-called lucky numbers in their papers so that number players may buy their papers.

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<sup>2</sup>Syrjamaki, *op. cit.*, footnote no. 10, p. 49.

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The departmentalization of such news as sports, society, and the theater is generally well-done tho general news is often badly scattered thruout the paper. There is a general tendency toward prodigality in the allotment of space to sports and somewhat less to drama and theater news in the small city as well as in the metropolitan weeklies. Little attention is given to book reviews except in half a dozen leading papers. Racial issues are always to the fore as one might naturally expect. Human interest feature material touching upon the lighter side of life is singularly absent; it is broached, however, occasionally in the signed columns of a personal type.<sup>3</sup> Cartoons on serious matters other than racial issues are rarely presented.

The use of pictorial journalism has been particularly played up by the Negro Press, and even the smallest country paper carries an ample share of cuts. Because of the expense of engraving involved, cheap cuts are used by small papers. The larger publications are able to indulge in lavish displays of halftone etchings and often devote between one-fifth to one-fourth of the entire space to pictures alone, the *Afro* leading all others in this respect. Larger papers, of course, use pictures as a part of their sensationalistic appeal. Yet, there is an evident calculated utilization of cuts to present news pictorially in the Negro Press. Such policy also serves as a healthy

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<sup>3</sup>*ibid.*, p. 50.



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check against the repression neurosis from which the Negro often suffers due to the complete apathy of the whites who deny him the privilege of enjoying all the social and cultural advantages which rightfully belong to him as an American citizen!

The proportion of space devoted to news as compared to that given to advertising is exceptionally high in most papers. Perhaps, an average for the leading papers would be between seventy-five and eighty per cent including pictures. Space devoted to editorials and columnists is from three to five per cent in many papers except in the *Pittsburgh Courier* which definitely overplays this angle. To conserve space, the *Courier* often uses small type in major stories with solid or very thinly leaded long lines. Stories on the front page of this paper, spreading sometimes from three to four columns in width, are printed with poor leading and in small type, thus causing undue strain on the readers' eyes—an aspect that no better class newspaper should neglect to take into consideration in publishing a newspaper. Such neglect makes the general appearance of the paper rather poor and its reading hard and harmful to the eyes. Quality is sacrificed for quantity, forgetting that this often defeats its main purpose, which is to have the news read on a large scale. *By and large, sense of balance and rhythm and an attractive display of type and pictures is generally lacking in all but two or three papers.*

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As pointed out earlier, while considerable progress has been shown in eliminating bias or personal opinions in the writing of news stories, some newspapers still find it difficult to be objective and honest in reporting news. Such papers often omit news affecting certain persons either because they have personal interest in them or because these persons are highly glamorized, popular, and well-known individuals and the newspapers prefer not to touch them adversely.

When the controversy between the church- and state-supported units at Wilberforce University ended in the dramatic dismissal of Dr. Charles H. Wesley as president of the University in June, 1947, and in the establishment of a separate state college at Wilberforce with Dr. Wesley as its first president, and when charges and counter-charges were hurled by each faction against the other, many Negro newspapers carried news favoring one faction only and either refused to present the other faction's point of view, or presented it meagerly, assigning to it some insignificant place.

Strange as it may seem, on two occasions the Negro Press ignored dynamic stories on the Wilberforce split, possibly because these stories touched a highly glamorized faction leader. All factions did some doubtful maneuvering. Quite often, their careless actions involved infringements on one's constitutional rights and civil liberties—actions full of tragic human drama, of

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actual assault and intimidation, of greed and selfishness, of corruption and immorality, of congenital incompetency, of "vested" or "divine" rights, of conflicting and self-centered ideologies, of moronic inefficiency, of Machiavellian diplomacy, of Jekyll and Hyde, but the Negro Press did not send in reporters to investigate even after it was made aware of the existence of such a story! Thus it lost a splendid opportunity to be of service to an age-old institution with unusual potentialities but temporarily stunned by internal warfare. At least, the welfare of the students should have prompted some of the leading Negro papers to look into this matter since their only justification for existence is that they are primarily interested in the uplift of the Negro race.

The White Press, completely mystified and confused by the civil war on the campus of a Negro institution, did not know what to do, though, be it said to its credit, that it did send in good reporters who saw all factions with the only motive of finding out the truth—the truth that was buried deeply in the past twelve years' history of that memorable institution. Not understanding Negro psychology, needless to say, they failed and frankly admitted their failure by being silent on the entire situation and waiting for things to develop.

How far some Negro newspapers flatly refuse to be objective and become autocratic in their general policies will be evident from the following incident:

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In December, 1947, Wilberforce University submitted an "ad" to the *Afro*, the *Courier*, and the *Crisis* magazine for possible publication in their mid-January issues. Realizing that the "ad" might be refused on the ground of its being controversial, in spite of its being factual, and to avoid unnecessary delay as well as expense, the University, after trimming its "ad" to one third its size, submitted a week later a second "ad" as a possible substitute for the previous one.

### THE FIRST "AD":

#### AN APPEAL TO THE ALUMNI OF WILBERFORCE UNIVERSITY

We are anxious to build our alumni records which have to be started from a scratch since Dr. Charles H. Wesley, president of the newly-created state college at Wilberforce, and Mr. Dorsey T. Murray, executive secretary of the Alumni Association, have flatly refused to let us have access to the names and addresses of our graduates and former students, even though I have been elected by the Alumni Association to be editor of the *Alumni Journal*. Please send to my office your name, the year of graduation or departure from the University, your present complete address, along with those of other alumni whose names and addresses you know. Please urge others to do likewise.

We have just finished preparing a very revealing, dynamic, and much-needed pamphlet, with no punches pulled. It is a document which throws light on the Wilberforce Dilemma created by the split between the church and the state—a split led by Dr. Charles H. Wesley. It is titled "The Wilberforce

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Dilemma—An Objective and Critical Evaluation of Dr. Wesley's Administration." Please send for it.

—Milton S. J. Wright, *Director*, Alumni Relations Office, Wilberforce University, P.O. Box 24, Wilberforce, Ohio.

### THE SECOND "AD" (SUBSTITUTE FOR THE FIRST ONE):

#### AN APPEAL TO WILBERFORCE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI

We are anxious to build our alumni records which have to be started from scratch since we are unable to get access to the records now in the files of the old Alumni Office. Please send to the undersigned your name, year of graduation or departure from the University, your present complete address, along with those of other alumni whose names and addresses you know, and urge others to do likewise. Thank You. —Milton S. J. Wright, *Director*, Alumni Relations, P.O. Box 24, Wilberforce University, Wilberforce, Ohio.

The *Crisis* refused the first "ad," but promptly accepted the second "ad." This was published in its February issue.

The *Afro* also promptly wrote accepting the second "ad," but stated, at the same time, that if the University still preferred the first "ad," the *Afro* would have to take some legal advice before giving the University its final answer. From later correspondence with the publisher about the Wilberforce split, the author seriously feels that the "ad" would have been refused.

The *Courier* took ten days to refuse the first "ad." Then after several days deliberation, it also refused the

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second "ad," naively assuring the University at the same time that this was done "in the best interest of all concerned." No commentary seems necessary on this action of the *Courier* except to point out the danger inherent in a newspaper that gets monopolistic control in the circulation of news—a monopoly made possible by the seventeen different state and regional editions which the *Courier* publishes each week thruout the United States, a monopoly that can be destroyed only by a readers' strike.

The *Courier* and the *Afro-American* gave only unfavorable publicity to Wilberforce University, showing her worst side while bringing out the best side of Dr. Wesley and his newly-created state college. Then, on November 29, 1947, the *Courier* carried the following italicized note on a news story titled, "Dr. Wesley, Mrs. Ransom Discuss Wilberforce":

*In keeping with the COURIER's policy of impartial reporting of the news and views, we present two pictures of the Wilberforce situation: one from the President of the State-supported school, the other from the wife of the Senior Bishop of the AME Church which supports the other school.*

Both were date-lined Wilberforce, Ohio. On reading the two columns one would get the impression that the *Courier* had interviewed these two persons. The fact of the matter was that Mrs. Ransom was never interviewed nor was any letter written to her on that subject. What she

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was purported to have said was literally copied from a letter that she had sent to the *Dayton Herald* for publication. In this letter she was expressing her protest against certain statements appearing in a news story published in the *Herald* and written by one Jack Vincent on the "Wilberforce Muddle."

The *Courier* made no reference to this newspaper, but gave its readers the impression that its story was either sent to it by the parties concerned or secured after an interview with them. To the author this appears nothing but dishonest journalism, and the *Courier* has been guilty of it on many occasions. Perhaps, that is its method of "making" news when none is available!

When the Director of Publicity of Wilberforce University protested to the *Courier* about this story on the ground that it gave bad publicity to Wilberforce, the *Courier's* answer was, "When the article was printed in the *Herald* it immediately became a public matter. What is your argument?"

The author's response, that letters to editors were not public in the sense that anyone could use their contents without even mentioning the newspapers in which such letters were originally printed, went unheeded.

The author has no desire to pass any judgment on the "Wilberforce split" led by Dr. Wesley except to say that all the blame does not lie on one side. The net result of the tragic split has been "faculty thrown against faculty,

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students thrown against students, board and community members divided into groups, gradual social disintegration, and false statements and confusion on all sides." The author's reason for making any reference to the incident at all is that he knows this case from first hand knowledge and hence feels secure in citing some of the incidents as mere samples of ethics of some Negro newspapers.

"Lifting" news and feature articles from newspapers and magazines of the White Press and passing them on as their own without giving any credit to proper sources is not an uncommon practice among Negro newspapers. Immediately after the *Newsweek* published a two-column illustrated story on the "Rose Meta House of Beauty"—a Negro enterprise in New York City which netted a profit of \$35,000 in 1946—this story was released by many newspapers, almost word for word, without the name of any agency or without any reference to its original source. Some newspapers rewrote the story immediately after its first appearance in the *Newsweek*—perhaps a "gentlemanly" form of stealing news without being held liable for such an action. The fact remains that the story, very valuable to the Negro Press, was first unearthed by some one connected with the *Newsweek* and was *copyrighted by it*.

It might be noted here, in passing, that Negro newspapers should be willing to pay for stories turned in in-



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stead of devising means to avoid payments. It is this sort of unfair treatment that has prevented many writers from turning in good stories with the result that many newspapers print stories after they are two or three weeks old. Certainly, the well-entrenched newspapers could afford to pay for good and fresh news stories!

## News-Gathering Agencies

THE COLLECTION of news for the Negro Press is done by reporters and correspondents covering local and regional centers, by voluntary reports made by institutions, fraternal organizations, business establishments, and other similar organizations, and by twenty - four news - gathering agencies of all types and shades. Only two of these news gathering agencies are of importance: the Associated Negro Press of Chicago and the National Negro Press Association of Washington, D. C.

The *Associated Negro Press* (ANP), 3507 South Parkway, Chicago 15, Illinois, still the oldest as well as the most comprehensive news services, is a cooperative news-gathering agency founded in 1919 by Claude A. Barnett for rendering service to Negro newspapers. Any newspaper of good standing which agrees to abide by the rules of the agency and pays an application fee of twenty-five dollars may be granted membership. Additional charge

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is made for the service itself. There were eighty-six newspapers which held membership as of January, 1948.

News is issued twice weekly and under two classifications: class "A" and class "B." These releases leave Chicago by mail on Friday and Monday of each week. Class "A" service entitles the holder to both releases. Class "B" service, which costs less, entitles the holder to receive the Friday release only.

Each member newspaper agrees to cover news in its vicinity and to report it to the ANP home office in Chicago for distribution to all the members. This agreement, however, is generally ignored by member-subscribers. The greater part of news relayed to the newspapers in the two weekly releases of the ANP is gathered by ANP's own staff. The ANP claims that spreading out from its Chicago office is a network of correspondents, one located in every center of considerable Negro population where news of vital importance to the Negro is apt to break. All types of information continuously pours into the Chicago office by mail from its selected correspondents. Many volunteer writers also hold credentials which officially establish them on a reportorial basis and designate them as newsgatherers. Some of the news touching Negro life is often culled from white newspapers and magazines. Many important Negro organizations also make use of the facilities of this agency to distribute news of their activities.

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Regarding the charge that ANP often acts as publicity agent for some institutions and groups rather than as an impartial news service, the director of ANP denies that the agency "ever 'sells out' its news service to any party, although he makes no secret of the fact that subjects of pictures are generally asked to underwrite the cost of cuts and mats."<sup>1</sup>

Engaged in the task of presenting information affecting the progress and achievements of the Negro, there is no doubt that the ANP as a pioneer organization has rendered and is still rendering signal service to the growth and development of the Negro Press.

The *National Negro Press Association* (NNPA), 2007 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Washington 9, D. C., is the youngest and yet, potentially, the most dynamic news-gathering agency that is serving the Negro Press today. As such, the NNPA news service has existed only since July 19, 1947. The Negro Newspaper Publishers Association decided to separate the news-gathering functions from its other activities at its June, 1947, convention. Thereupon, a group comprising eleven publishers holding membership in the Publishers Association took over the news setup without interruption of service and pooled the needed funds to carry it on with the same personnel. Following the successful technique of the Associated Press, they reorgan-

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<sup>1</sup>Myrdal, *op. cit.*, footnote 30, pp. 1424-1425.

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ized the service so as to insure greater national coverage. A written agreement for reciprocal exchange of news was required of all newspapers using the NNPA service. Except for this essentially technical change-over, however, the service dates back to an earlier period, as will be explained later.

Realizing that coordination of ideas and policies and closer association among publishers were conducive to healthier competition and mutual benefits, a large number of newspaper representatives met in Chicago on February 9, 1940, and formed the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association.<sup>2</sup>

When the 99th Fighter Squadron (formerly, the 99th Pursuit Squadron), the first all-Negro air unit, was assigned to combat duty on June 1, 1943, practically every important newspaper wanted to have its own representatives cover its activities. This, of course, the War Department could not very well permit. So, Major General A. D. Surles, then director of the Bureau of Public Relations of the War Department, suggested that newspapers anxious to have direct coverage should form a "pool" for getting news thru one or two correspondents with the

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<sup>2</sup>A similar organization, known as the National Negro Press Association, was in existence during the First World War and was very militant in its activities in the twenties. Its main purpose was "the moral, material and general betterment of the Negro press in the United States and the world."

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understanding that such news coverage would be shared alike by all members of the "pool."

The first "pooling" arrangement lasted only two or three weeks. However, the idea of cooperative coverage of news and the promise of the War Department to give priority in transportation and wire facilities to correspondents selected by a group of newspapers working cooperatively caught the imagination of fourteen publishers of leading newspapers. They immediately formed a general "War Correspondents' Pool."

Washington, during the war, was clearly the biggest source of news of major interest to the Negro reading public. Even now, it is the chief point of origin of the biggest news, not only of general, national, and international import, but of and about the American Negro. Great issues are always coming before the Supreme Court, before Congress, before the various government bureaus and departments, before chief officials, before the President himself—issues affecting the most fundamental problems and aspirations of Negro Americans.

Recognizing the importance of news emanating from Washington and the imperative need for a central bureau to gather and distribute such news, the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association proceeded to set up an office in that city in 1944, with Harry S. McAlpin, previously of the *Chicago Defender*, as its first head. The Association also succeeded in getting a Negro correspondent accred-

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ited to the White House by a direct appeal to President Roosevelt, at a conference in the White House on February 5, 1944. McAlpin was selected for this job. Finally, and after long negotiations, the Association was able to get Negro representatives admitted to the Congressional Press Galleries on March 18, 1947. Louis R. Lautier and P. L. Prattis, correspondent for *Our World*, a leading Negro magazine, were the first Negro representatives admitted to the Congressional Press Galleries. Lautier is also the present White House correspondent and chief of the NNPA news service.

Thanks to the continued efforts of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association to get Negro newspapers recognized in every phase of activity of the Congress and of the President of the United States, two Negro journalists, P. Bernard Young, Jr., editor of the *Journal and Guide* and chairman of the NNPA news service, and Llewellyn A. Coles, editor of the *Ohio State News* and vice-president of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, were accredited to the press group comprising a total of twenty-eight persons accompanying President Harry S. Truman on his official tour which left Washington, D.C., on February 20, 1948, for Key West, Florida, and thence to Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Cuba. The third Negro representative included in the group was Lem Graves, Jr., Washington correspondent of the *Pittsburgh Courier*. This was the first time that Negroes have

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been accepted to the press group accompanying the President of the United States.

All active members of the Association received this news service free as the cost for it was included in the annual assessments paid to the Association by them on the basis of their net paid circulation.

Some of the members of the Publishers Association did not like the idea of paying large assessments in order to keep the news service going since they were also maintaining their own correspondents or bureaus in the capital city. These members brought pressure on the June, 1947, convention of the Association and succeeded in inducing it to give up its news gathering activities. The *Pittsburgh Courier* took the lead in this fight as it felt that the service was merely a duplication of its own efforts with its own seventeen different state or regional editors and staff members scattered thruout the nation. Furthermore, the *Courier* was opposed to the idea of further expansion in this service, as was first proposed, and of being charged for the services on the basis of circulation, especially since it was leading all other papers in circulation and would, therefore, be required to pay the largest fee for this service. This, the *Courier* selfishly argued, would be subsidizing the service at its expense only to receive stronger competition from small newspapers which would be required to pay only small fees for the same service. There-



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upon, eleven newspapers, as explained earlier, took over this service.

To maintain the goodwill created by the earlier service of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, the organizers of the new service decided to call it the "National Negro Press Association," and thus retain the initials NNPA, which had then become popularly associated with the news service.

Slowly but steadily, the NNPA is expanding its news coverage nationwide. Even tho a great deal of the news dispatched by it may carry a Washington date line, it is not Washington news in the local or restricted sense. For example, the recent reports by the President's committees on civil rights and on education, the earlier reports on the utilization of Negroes in the military forces, and the Supreme Court's decisions in the University of Oklahoma lawsuit suggest the nature of the type of news made in the capital. It is news of the very essence of importance to people seeking to escape second class citizenship.

The NNPA sends out four regular mimeographed releases each week. Wednesday's release is primarily feature and column material; Friday's and Saturday's are primarily spot news; Monday's is supplementary spot news. In addition, telegraphic service of news breaking on the deadline is sent to those papers which have previously authorized its dispatch by press rate collect telegrams.

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While the NNPA is providing only occasional foreign service at present it is giving more and more national coverage thru news coverage arrangements with its subscribers. The service is available to any newspaper and the fee is determined on the basis of net paid circulation.

In 1945, when this service was still a part of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, forty-eight newspapers, including one daily, with a combined circulation of one and one-half million copies a week, were subscribers to this service. As of January 1948, this reorganized service had thirty-three newspapers on its membership list with an estimated total circulation of 821,527. The *Pittsburgh Courier* was not a subscriber to this service.

The NNPA news service reports that it has had inquiries from England, Virgin Islands, Ethiopia, South Africa, Panama, Gold Coast, and Nigeria regarding the availability of its news to publications in those countries. In many other places, there are great numbers of persons of African descent and of other colored races who are interested in the activities of Negro Americans. The NNPA and other American Negro news services have thus additional avenues of expansion in these directions.

It is evident that with the active support of newspaper publishers, with the growing national coverage made possible thru an exchange-of-news agreement from its subscribers, with its chief office located in the key city of Washington, D.C., and with capable and seasoned men

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behind it, this service will undoubtedly offer keen competition to the ANP—the oldest and, seemingly, still the strongest and best known news-gathering service.

How long the one-man dominated ANP will be able to survive against the growing competition of the NNPA is a matter of conjecture. Nevertheless, the reader may sense the trend from the outburst of the *Ohio State News* in its 1948 New Year's edition. The *News* implied that its decision to subscribe to the NNPA news service (it was already a subscriber to the ANP service) was a clear indication of its progress and that its readers could, from then on, rely upon a better news coverage!

On the other hand, both services may survive and grow, competing against and supplementing each other. There is not now a complete duplication of subscribers using both services. Many papers can afford to be subscribers to both NNPA and ANP. Both could prosper with support from a sufficient number of weeklies now in business. Survival of both services would remove the dangers inherent in a monopolistic news service. The White Press is much more extensive and much more secure financially than the Negro Press, it is true. It (the White Press) supports three major news-gathering agencies which offer twenty-four hour wire services and, literally, hundreds of special news, feature, and photo services. It would seem, therefore, that there is room for two

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strong semi-weekly or even daily news services devoted to the interest of the rapidly growing Negro Press.

*Continental Features*, 507 Fifth Avenue, New York City 17, specializing in several syndicated cartoons and comic strips, serve some eighty-seven Negro papers a week. Prior to the Second World War, Continental Features also released articles on sports and the theater, but it had to discontinue this part of its service during the war and has not been able to resume it "because of shortage of newsprint paper."

*Calvin's News Service*, 101 W. 46 Street, New York City 19, was founded in 1935 and offers its patrons, free of charge, theater, sports, general, spot, and labor news as well as feature articles, photographs, and matrices. The releases are dispatched weekly by mail, but there may also be week-end flashes when the nature of the material merits them.

The *Continental Press Association*, 2703 E. 22 Street, Kansas City, Missouri, was founded in 1935 by C. E. Chapman. Like Calvin's, it is a private organization which dispenses general news in small quantities, photographs, and matrices.

The *Atlas News and Photo Service* was founded in Chicago in 1941 by Fred Douglas Downer. It is a cooperative enterprise which supplies its more than fifty member-

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papers with photo service and occasional news items. This service is also offered free to the newspaper publishers; the cost of photographs and matrices is borne by the publicized subject. Any newspaper that agrees to use the releases may have the services once each week.<sup>8</sup> Its present location is at 444 E. 47 Street, Chicago 15, Illinois.

The *Scott Newspaper Syndicate*, 210 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, and the *Informer Syndicate*, 2418 Leland Avenue, Houston 3, Texas, maintain independent and exclusive services of their own.

In addition to these services, various recent directories list the following seventeen services, most of which are one-man organizations and do not play an important part as news-gathering agencies of national scope:

*Amalgamated News Agency*, 407 Columbus Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts.

*Hampton Institute Press Service*, Hampton Institute, Virginia.

*Howard News Syndicate*, 515 Mulberry Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

*Independent Press Service*, 48 W. 48 Street, New York City.

*NAACP Press Service*, 20 W. 40 Street, New York City 18.

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<sup>8</sup>Walter H. Hollins, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

## NEWS GATHERING AGENCIES

*National Negro Features*, 501 E. First Street, Los Angeles, California.

*Negro Digest News Service*, 5619 S. State Street, Chicago, Illinois.

*Negro Labor News Service*, 312 W. 125 Street, New York City.

*Negro Press Bureau*, 4255 Central Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

*Pacific News Service*, 617 N. Main Street, Los Angeles, California.

*Progress News Service*, 80 Wickliff Street, Newark, New Jersey.

*Reciprocal News Service*, 1600 N. Thirteenth Street, Washington, D.C.

*Tuskegee Institute Press Service*, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama.

*United News Company*, 6306 Rhodes Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

*Victory News Service*, 839 W. Walnut Street, Milwaukee 5, Wisconsin.

*White Newspaper Syndicate*, P. O. Box 58, Hamtramck, Michigan.

*World Newspaper Syndicate* (present address unknown).

## Advertising in the Negro Press

TWO MAIN REASONS have prevented Negro newspapers from developing as lucrative a source of income from advertising as have white papers generally:

First, until recently, Negro papers have had to rely mainly upon the patronage of business establishments in Negro neighborhoods. These establishments have not been sufficiently numerous nor affluent to be rich sources of revenue for Negro newspapers; consequently, advertising revenue from them has been negligible. Since the late twenties, however, newspapers in major cities have been able to secure increasingly larger revenues from local retail advertising. Most of them are derived from retail establishments in segregated communities and from centrally located retail outlets with large Negro patronage. According to one prominent advertising representative, more than ninety-five per cent of the establishments using Negro newspapers for advertising purposes are owned and managed by whites.

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Second, prior to the thirties, the growth of the Negro Press was recognized only by a handful of important national advertisers which included, among others, manufacturers of Camel cigarettes, White Owl cigars, Lifebuoy soap, Chevrolet automobiles, and Bond bread. This lack of recognition of the Negro Press on a larger scale as an advertising medium was partly offset by the efforts of W. B. Ziff Company of Chicago, a white organization which served as publishers' representatives and which sought to secure the patronage of nationally advertised merchandise for Negro newspapers. The Ziff Company's efforts were partly successful in securing some advertising, but in the late thirties it began withdrawing itself from this field and finally gave it up entirely, changing its name to Ziff-Davis Publishing Company and devoting itself first to the publication of specialized magazines for fishing, hunting, and other sports, and finally to book publishing.

Apart from the early efforts of Ziff Company in securing the patronage of a small number of national advertisers for the Negro Press, a few individual newspapers were able to attract such national advertisers as Gerber's products, El Producto cigars, Pepsi-Cola, and Seagrams and other nationally known liquor brands. Among those which were successful in selling the Negro Press to national advertisers, the *Afro-American* was the foremost pio-



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neer. The *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Chicago Defender*, the *Kansas City Call*, and the *Norfolk Journal and Guide* were also among the early pioneers in this respect.

In 1940, Interstate United Newspaper, Inc., 545 Fifth Avenue, New York City 17, was organized by the late Robert Vann of the *Pittsburgh Courier* and Ira Lewis, now president of the *Courier*. Together, they bought the business formerly operated by Howard Crohn, who was once the eastern manager for W. B. Ziff Company. To capture some of the major advertising accounts, the Interstate set in motion the preparation of special studies on Negro consumer markets in important cities having large Negro populations—studies similar to those completed by the *Afro-American* in 1945. The organization campaigned vigorously and successfully for some important advertising accounts. The leading sales arguments to prospective customers were that the purchasing power of the Negro had risen from four billion dollars in the twenties to seven billion dollars in the thirties, and over ten billion dollars in the forties, and that the Negro was a large buyer of goods by brand names.

William Black, a capable, young, hard-working man, joined this organization in 1942. With the help of his associates and by dint of hard work and presentation of cold facts, he succeeded in securing the patronage of many nationally known merchandise advertisers who had

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hitherto limited their patronage to only a few papers. Among the national advertisers whose patronage was secured by the Interstate, one finds Calvert, Seagrams, and other well known distillers' products; Tromer's, Pabst, and Hoffman beers; Coca Cola, Pepsi-Cola, and Royal Crown Colas; Chevrolet, Ford, Buick, and Chrysler; Bond Bread, General Baking, Corn Products, Best Foods, American Sugar Refineries, Safeway and A & P Stores, and a few other nationally known food manufacturers and distributors.

Following the pattern of white advertising agencies, first suggested to Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn Advertising Agency by William Vomack, formerly of the Ziff Company, and by Joseph B. La Cour, formerly of the *Afro-American*, Interstate was able to employ the technique of using testimonial advertisements by Negro artists. Nehi Corporation now advertises its Royal Crown Colas in the Negro Press with the endorsements of such celebrities as "Peg Leg" Bates, "Hot Lips" Page, Erskine Hawkins, and others.

All in all, Interstate, the first and evidently the largest representative of Negro publishers, is doing a commendable job. As of January, 1948, it claimed to be serving 135 periodicals. As of February, 1948, publications represented by it had a slightly greater Audit Bureau of Circulations total than any other group in the Negro field even tho the number of ABC papers represented by it was small.

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The *Pittsburgh Courier* with its seventeen separate editions is Interstate's most important customer. The *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Kansas City Call*, and the *Scott Newspaper Syndicate Group* are among its next important customers.

Interstate is a profit making organization set up on a purely business basis to increase the volume of quality national advertising in the Negro Press. It receives its compensation in the form of commissions from secured business. Its management claims that it has sold more than three million lines of paid advertising in one year and is continuously increasing its volume. Recently, it spent forty thousand dollars in cooperation with its member papers to secure exact figures on the brand preferences of Negroes from coast to coast and has published the result of its study in an illustrated pamphlet titled, *The National Negro Market*.

In March, 1944, the Associated Publishers, Inc., 526 Fifth Avenue, New York City 19, was formed under the joint ownership of the *Afro-American Group* comprising six newspapers, Carter Wesley of the *Informer Group*, the *Journal and Guide*, the *Michigan Chronicle*, and the *Louisville Defender*. All of them are among the most prominent customers of the Association. None of the newspapers served by the Associated Publishers patronize the Interstate and vice versa.

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In the short space of four years, the Associated Publishers has made rapid progress and is now serving twenty-four newspapers. The combined weekly circulation of these twenty-four papers is a little over half a million. Two-thirds of the newspapers having membership in the Audit Bureau of Circulations belong to this Association which now has a branch office in Chicago and employs a total of fifteen full time workers. From all available records it appears that the Association has proven satisfactory to the newspapers it represents and has earned for itself an enviable reputation among important agencies and advertisers. It has been fortunate in having experienced, highly capable, and alert management and staff. This may account, in part, for the rapid stride it has made within the limited space of less than four years.

The names of advertising agencies operated by Negroes, as distinguished from the publishers' representatives just discussed, are: David J. Sullivan, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York City 17; Brandford Advertising, Inc., 107 West 43rd Street, New York City; J. W. Christian & Associates, 501 West 145th Street, New York City; W. B. Graham & Associates, 55 West 42nd Street, New York City; Sidne Flanders, Inc., 489 Fifth Avenue, New York City; Davis, Fouché & Powell, Inc., 6308 Cottage Grove Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois; J. B. Williams & Associates, 622 E. 68th Street, Chicago 38, Illinois; A. L. Foster & Associates, 417 E. 47th Street, Chicago 15, Illinois; and

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the City Service Advertising Agency, 3447 S. Indiana Avenue, Chicago 16, Illinois. Some newspapers, notably among them the *Chicago Defender*, maintain their own advertising departments which secure both local and national advertising for their respective papers.

Commenting upon the patronage of the Negro Press by white national advertisers, Joseph B. La Cour, manager of the Associated Publishers, Inc., makes the following observations in a letter to the author, dated January 5, 1948:

Misrepresentation of circulation and lack of believable and authentic market data have also militated against the acceptance of media serving our market and the colored family as a consumer.

However, the picture is improving and with that improvement, important national advertisers are giving greater recognition to the market and its media. Factors have been the initiation of consumer research studies by the *Afro-American* Newspapers, the subsequent national surveys of Interstate United Newspapers, and the Pittsburgh study sponsored by the *Courier*.

The growth in ABC circulation has also been contributory. For example, in 1930 only two Negro newspapers, the *Kansas City Call* and the *Amsterdam News*, held membership in the Audit Bureau of Circulations. Their combined total was 52,000. As of November, 1947, twenty-four newspapers hold ABC membership with a combined circulation in excess of 1,100,000 and two magazines with a total combined circulation of 361,000. Obviously, today we have more

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in the way of proved circulation with which to attract advertisers and to command their attention and respect.

It is pertinent, however, to point out that there still remain many advertisers and agencies who do not give to the Negro market the mature consideration it deserves.

A study of sixty-one newspapers in 1938 showed that only nineteen, on the basis of liberal criteria, had developed their local advertising field with any success. Only five carried legal advertising, and these were in limited amounts.<sup>1</sup> Further study made in 1947 showed that nationally circulating weeklies more than doubled their advertising lineage during the past ten years and that they were receiving more and more of national advertising coverage in their national editions. The *Pittsburgh Courier* led all others in national advertising by a wide margin. Local advertising has also more than doubled, and in some cases more than trebled, in many papers whose circulation is limited to a radius of about fifty miles.

The advertising in the nationally circulating papers, still small in volume, is virtually completely national in appeal and consists mainly of advertisements for colas, beers, and liquors; for hair and skin lotions; for leading automobiles, food products, and patent medicines. Advertisements of hair and skin lotions, easily the richest advertising contracts for the Negro Press, are generally limited to a few larger, nationally circulating papers and

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<sup>1</sup>Syrjamaki, *op. cit.*, footnote no. 12, p. 51.

## THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

magazines, and do not reach small city papers. Patent medicine advertising tends to appear in all types of papers.

Occasionally, the papers receive some lavish propaganda advertisements of election campaigns, of big business anxious to present its side of the case on some long-standing strike, especially when the public seems to be sympathetic towards the strikers, or of an industry explaining its stand in a labor strike.

The general appearance of advertising in the smaller papers seems restrained and reasonable. These papers do not unduly engage in hawking doubtful nostrums. This is generally true of the Negro Press as a whole altho the *Afro-American*, the *Chicago Defender*, and the *Pittsburgh Courier* have been, until recently, gross violators in this respect. This may have been due to the fact that, being the best sources of national advertising, they received this patronage as a matter of course. Furthermore, they were dependent upon this support, since they received but scant attention even from big national advertisers.

The *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Ohio State News*, the *St. Louis Argus*, the *Baltimore Afro-American*, the *Washington Afro-American*, the *Journal and Guide*, the *Indianapolis Recorder*, the *Louisiana Weekly*, the *Atlanta Daily World*, and a few others are leaders in securing extensive local advertising. A considerable amount of the total advertising space in these papers is devoted

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to "legitimate" and local advertising. The *People's Voice*, a newcomer in the field of journalism, also stands up to this measure.

The proportion of space given to advertising varies from fifteen to twenty-five per cent for leading papers and from seven to fifteen for small papers. Some small papers with aggressive management like the *Ohio State News* and the *St. Louis Argus* have succeeded in selling from thirty to fifty per cent of their space for advertising. These are, however, only second class newspapers with great potentialities.



## A Brief History of the Negro Newspaper

### ANTE-BELLUM NEWSPAPERS

THE FIRST NEGRO newspaper was published in New York on March 16, 1827, by John B. Russwurm and Samuel E. Cornish under the name of *Freedom's Journal*. This name was later changed to *Rights of All*. It was the forerunner to Garrison's *Liberator* and was militant in its fight against slavery. In 1830, Russwurm was captured by the Colonization Society and sent to Africa, and this resulted in the suspension of the paper.

In January 1837, Phillip A. Bell of New York started the *Weekly Advocate*, selecting Samuel E. Cornish as its editor. Two months later, the name of the paper was changed to the *Colored American*, and, like its predecessor, it took up the fight against slavery. This paper was finally discontinued in 1842.

Some of the other publications of the period were: the *Elevator* (1842), published in Albany by Stephen Myers;

## A BRIEF HISTORY

the *National Watchman* (1842), published in Troy, New York, by William G. Allen and Henry Highland Garnett; the *Clarion* (1842), successor to the *National Watchman*, in Troy, New York, by Henry Highland Garnett; the *People's Press* (1843) in Troy by Thomas Hamilton and John Dias; the *Mystery* (1843) in Pittsburgh by Major Martin R. Delaney; the *Genius of Freedom* (1846?) in New York by David Ruggles; the *Ram's Horn* (1847) in New York by Willis A. Hodges and Thomas Van Rensselaer; the *North Star* (1847) in Rochester by Frederick Douglass; the *Imperial Citizen* (1848) in Syracuse by Samuel R. Ward; the *Colored Man's Journal* (1851) in New York by Louis H. Putman; the *Alienated American* (1852) in Cleveland, Ohio, by Professor W. H. H. Day; the *Mirror of the Times* (1855) in San Francisco by Hon. Mifflin W. Gibbs as one of its editors, the paper later merging into the *Pacific Appeal* in 1862; the *Herald of Freedom* (1855) in Ohio by Peter H. Clark; and a few others.

All of these early papers were militant in their general policies and were motivated by a burning desire to secure justice for Negroes, slave or free. The founders of the papers were men of strong character who were primarily interested in educating their readers and in spreading information about the conditions under which the American Negroes were living. Since the founders did not

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measure the success of their papers by the profits they made from their sales but rather by the service they rendered to the community, these newspapers, with the exception of the *North Star* (renamed *Frederick Douglass' Paper* in 1850 and finally discontinued in 1864), had short lives running from two months to five years.

The *National Reformer* (1833) published by William Whipper; the *Mirror of Liberty* (1837) by David Ruggles, and the *Anglo-African Magazine* by Thomas Hamilton were the only magazines published during this period. All of these were short-lived. To this group may be added the *Christian Recorder*, a religious weekly that was first started as a quarterly in 1841, then changed to a weekly in 1848 as the *Christian Herald*, and finally took its present name as the *Christian Recorder* in 1856. This is the only publication that has managed to survive thru the Civil War and the two World Wars.

### FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

"From the year 1866 on," observes I. Garland Penn in his splendid book, *The Afro-American Press*, "Afro-American newspapers were being founded in almost every state, some of which died an early death, while others survived many years. Some dropped their original

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name, and, under another, exist today."<sup>1</sup> According to Penn, there were thirty newspapers by 1880. Seventeen of these were published in the South where ninety per cent or close to six million Negroes out of the total Negro population of six and one half million were residing. The remaining thirteen papers were published in the North where only half a million Negroes were residing. What actually happened was that many of the Northern papers also served the people of the South, a situation which is true even to this day and which was discussed fully in the previous chapter.

America's interest in the Allies and her final entry into the European conflict gave further impetus to the influence and growth of Negro newspapers. At least twenty-four newspapers were started between 1900 and the close of the First World War (1919), and half of these were started during the duration of the war. At the end of the First World War, there were 220 newspapers and 230 religious, fraternal, college, and other miscellaneous periodicals, making a total of 450 periodicals.<sup>2</sup> The circulation of most of the now well-entrenched newspapers like the *Philadelphia Tribune* (started in 1884), the *New York Age* (1885), the *Afro-American* (1892), the *Norfolk Journal and Guide* (1900), the *Chicago De-*

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<sup>1</sup>I. Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press*, Springfield, Massachusetts: Willey & Co., 1891, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup>*Negro Year Book*, 1918-1919, p. 461.

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*fender* (1905), the *Amsterdam News* (1909), and the *Pittsburgh Courier* (1910) was increasing rapidly during this period.

### FROM THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO DATE

From the close of the First World War to the year of the stock market crash of 1929, at least twenty-one additional Negro newspapers were started. The long, never-ending depression of the thirties witnessed the following changes in the Negro Press: the suspension of close to eighty newspapers, eliminating the financially weak ones and strengthening further those which were in capable hands; the birth of thirty-two new newspapers; the doubling, and, in some cases, trebling of circulation of many papers; the rapid increase in advertising lineage; the installation of new and expensive printing equipment; and the dispatching of foreign correspondents to Europe by two papers. This period between 1919 to 1929 also witnessed the development of newspaper "combines" or affiliates and the introduction of different editions for different states or regions. The *Pittsburgh Courier* was leading others in circulation, closely followed by the *Afro-American*, the *Atlanta World* and its affiliates, the *Houston Informer* and its affiliates; and the *Chicago Defender* and its affiliates. The *Atlanta World*, founded by W. A. Scott II on August 5, 1928, became a semi-weekly in the Spring of 1930, then a tri-weekly on April 20, 1931, and

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finally a daily on March 13, 1932, when its name was changed to *Atlanta Daily World*. In the meantime, several newspapers were started or joined as affiliates when the *Scott Newspaper Syndicate* was established. In 1941, this syndicate had twenty-nine affiliates. A special Sunday edition was added to the regular daily edition, but was later discontinued. By 1948, the number of affiliates was reduced to thirteen.

In the fall of 1934, the *Harlem Heights Daily Citizen* was started in New York as a daily, but within three months it was suspended. It soon became evident that it was well nigh impossible to start an independent Negro daily and make a business success of it all by itself. The *Daily Bulletin*, Ohio's colored daily newspaper, was founded in Dayton in 1942. It was more of an advertising, four tabloid-page bulletin than a newspaper, even if one were to judge it by the simple standards of the *Atlanta Daily World* referred to above. It ceased publication in 1945, but the *Ohio Daily Express*, started in 1944 and patterned after the *Bulletin* is still in existence. It is also a four-page tabloid bulletin of hardly any news value, serving only as an advertising instrument for its owners. Neither the *Daily Bulletin* nor the *Ohio Daily Express* deserves the classification of a newspaper. The *Atlanta Daily World* has been able to survive for a long time as a daily mainly because it has many affiliates which absorb its losses. Furthermore, Atlanta city has the most progressive business

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community in the South as well as the largest number of colleges; this results in getting a more sustained support to the city's Negro daily.

Commenting upon the growth of the Negro Press, Joseph B. La Cour observes:

This vitality of the Negro press as demonstrated under obviously difficult conditions is the essence of its strength as a business institution. In this strength resides its economic and cultural value to the Negro group. It's axiomatic that a financially strong press can best serve the true interests of its public. This applies not only to its ability to secure and present news and features but to its ability to utter forthright and honest editorial opinions.<sup>3</sup>

In 1945, there were 110 newspapers, 45 religious, fraternal, college and other miscellaneous newspapers, and 100 magazines and bulletins, making a total of 255 Negro periodicals.<sup>4</sup> As of January, 1948, there were a total of 169 newspapers, 56 college campus publications of all types, and over 100 religious, fraternal, general, and other papers, bulletins, and magazines, making a grand total of 325 periodicals.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Joseph B. La Cour, "The Negro Press as a Business," *Crisis*, April, 1941, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup>*Negro Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States*, 1945, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup>*Supra*, chapter 5, p. 68.

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### NEGRO MAGAZINES TODAY

This brief history of Negro newspapers will not be complete without some mention of the existing status of Negro magazines. They, too, are helping in the development of Negro education and culture, and have given jobs to several hundred persons. Some of them have achieved professional standards that can be compared favorably with the best magazines. There were 100 Negro magazines and periodical bulletins published in the United States in 1945. Some of these publications are of doubtful cultural value, some are purely religious and fraternal publications, while a few others are as good and scholarly as any publications of their kind. Less than half a dozen of these, however, have proven commercially successful.

The *Phylon* (1940), started by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois and edited by him until the summer of 1944 and since then edited by Dr. Ira De A. Reid; the *Journal of Negro Education* (1932), started and edited by Charles H. Thompson under the auspices of Howard University; the *Journal of Negro History* (1916), started and edited by Dr. Carter G. Woodson; and *Opportunity, the Journal of Negro Life* (1923), started and published under the auspices of the National Urban League deserve first mention because of their high scholastic standards. All of these are issued four times a year; their main appeal is



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limited to scholars and educators which naturally results in small circulation.

The *Crisis* (1910), founded by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois and edited by him for several years and now edited by Roy K. Wilkins, and published under the auspices of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is a monthly publication of popular interest with an estimated circulation of close to 40,000 an issue in 1947. Other non-religious and non-fraternal periodicals of promising scholarship which deserve mention here, for reasons given below, are: the *Negro History Bulletin* (1934), edited by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, for its contribution in the stimulation of interest of students and teachers in the Negro's contribution to civilization; the *Negro College Quarterly* started as the *Wilberforce University Quarterly* in 1939, changed to its present functional name in 1942, and edited by Dr. Vishnu V. Oak since its founding, for its short and varied articles of educational interest;<sup>6</sup> and the *Quarterly Journal of Higher Education among Negroes* (1933), started and edited by Dean T. E. McKinney under the auspices of Johnson C. Smith University, for its reports of proceedings of important educational conferences and other chronicles of higher education among Negroes.

The *Negro Digest* (1942), a publication modeled after the *Reader's Digest* and edited by John H. Johnson

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<sup>6</sup>Temporarily suspended since June, 1947.

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and others of Chicago, has shown great promise, and its well-edited articles, its rapidly growing circulation, and its pleasing format have helped it to become a very popular Negro magazine. Encouraged by its success, the editors of the *Negro Digest* started in October, 1945, the publication of *Ebony*, modeled after *Life*, and are publishing a highly creditable magazine of excellent quality which has jumped in circulation so rapidly that, as of January, 1948, it stood at the top among Negro periodicals of all types. In June, 1947, its Audit Bureau of Circulations figure was close to 325,000.

*Headlines* (1944), spicily-written, monthly publication fashioned after *Time* magazine and edited by Louis Martin in Detroit, undoubtedly showed exceptional promise even tho it got a late start in the period of war prosperity and lived only two years.

Other new magazine ventures which indicate the growing literary interest of the Negro and which deserve mention because of their nation-wide appeal are: *Our World* (New York), *Color* (West Virginia), *The Negro South* (New Orleans), *The Negro* (St. Louis), and *Bronze Confessions* (Miami).

*Pep*, a worthy but poorly executed attempt to model after the *Editor and Publisher* magazine, showed considerable improvement after it was taken over by the School of Journalism at Lincoln University of Missouri in 1945, but soon after that it met sudden death. The need

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for such a journal is great, but it cannot prove successful as a business venture at the present stage of the Negro's business progress. For that reason, it has to be published as a service agency to Negro newspapers and periodicals. The Negro Newspaper Publishers Association or some other similar agency should undertake the responsibility of its resumption and thereby render a badly-needed service to the betterment of the Negro Press as a whole.

## Suggestions for Improvement

ONE IS FORCED to admit that, despite the many faults of commission and omission, some of which are quite common also to the White Press, the Negro Press is rendering an invaluable service in crystalizing Negro thought and action. In serving as a necessary outlet to the Negro's otherwise thwarted ambitions and repressed anger against the injustices of his white compatriots, it is also preventing the birth of more "Bigger Thomases." Hounded at every turn, unable to enjoy even the ordinary decencies of what we call the "American way of living," debarred from recreational activities and eating facilities open to white Americans, the Negro finds that his press is the only outlet for him and the only place where he sees himself depicted very much as he is and for what he is worth without the normal prejudices which meet him at every turn in his dealings with the dominant race.

Measured by the amount of investment returns, no other Negro business enterprise has paid the investor so

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handsomely as the newspaper. This is especially true in the case of big profit-making newspapers like the *Courier*, the *Afro*, and others whose owners and top executives "have incomes ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 and upwards a year."<sup>1</sup> In addition to these attractive profits, the newspaper entrepreneurs may well be proud of the fact that they have been, slowly but surely, arousing the social conscience of their own racial group as well as those members of the white group who read Negro papers to the injustices meted to the Negro. Here is one case where "enlightened self-interest" has proven to be a blessing all around.

This enlightened self-interest and the desire to streamline business techniques so as to conform to the latest conceptions of public service ought to induce Negro newspaper publishers to introduce the following reforms immediately—reforms which will pay them in the long run thru increased sales and greater popularity:

(1) All news should be properly classified and then should be printed on a definite page or pages, thus making it easy for the reader to find quickly the type of news in which he is especially interested.

(2) If large white dailies (and dailies are certainly hard pressed for time) can manage to find time to prepare a daily index of major items of news covered by their

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<sup>1</sup>Conrad, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

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papers, there is absolutely no excuse whatever for Negro weeklies and semi-weeklies not doing likewise.

(3) Local issues should be more frequently espoused and more persistently followed and kept alive until these issues are satisfactorily solved.

(4) Incomplete news stories should be followed in subsequent issues with later developments and closing stories. Otherwise, readers are prone to believe that the newspaper concerned is either incompetent or that it has been "paid off."

(5) Sensationalism should be toned down considerably, especially by certain newspapers who seem to exploit shamelessly people's miseries and misfortunes. Freedom of the press should not be turned into license of the press.

(6) All correspondence should be promptly handled. The author's own experience, corroborated by many of his friends, has been very sad, indeed, in this respect. In these days of enlightened public opinion, when the need for good public relations is so important, newspapers should show more respect to the public instead of assuming a contemptuously silent or "the-public-be-damned" attitude.

(7) Sell-outs during the Presidential election years should be regarded as the worst sort of Quislingism. After all, a Negro newspaper is a crusading organ even tho it



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cannot ignore the business angle altogether. While struggling small town weeklies and bi-weeklies may have some excuse for their sell-outs, there is absolutely no excuse for successful large city newspapers doing likewise. Unfortunately, the large papers are often the worst offenders and do more harm to Negro morale. "Of what avail is it to White fighters for Negro advancement and honest Negro leadership," asks Conrad in despair, "if their work is to be canceled out in critical election moments?" Continuing, he gives this solemn warning, "This situation has implications of dynamite for the elections of 1948. In the current disillusion with Truman,<sup>2</sup> prevalent in Negro ranks, those papers which, in 1944, sold themselves to the Republicans (while praying for a Roosevelt victory) now have a better excuse, a rationalization, for the possible 'deals' with them in 1948."<sup>3</sup>

(8) News should be written without bias or without personal opinion injected into it. While considerable progress has been made in this respect, a large number of Negro newspapers still find it difficult to be objective and

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<sup>2</sup>Author's note: While this statement was true in 1946, the courageous stand taken by Truman since 1947 on many controversial issues is gradually swinging the vote of the Negro intelligentsia back to him and to those of his colleagues who have shown equally strong courage of their convictions and have come out openly for a real democracy at home.

<sup>3</sup>Conrad, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

honest in reporting news, and often omit news affecting someone in whom they have personal interest. News should be treated as news, even if it happens to be adverse to highly glamorized individuals. *No one is so sacred that he need be given the privilege of trampling over anyone's constitutional rights.*

(9) Old news should not be published just because it was once sensational. When the Kiwanis Club in Ahoskie, N. C., refused to give Harvey Jones the Cadillac he had won on a lottery ticket because of his being a Negro, it was a big news story to the Negro Press. Within forty-eight hours after the news became public, the Kiwanis Club reversed its decision. Yet many Negro newspapers played the first part of the story several days later, ignoring the sequel entirely or playing it down. Such ethics in journalism will, in the long run, hurt everyone.

(10) When articles are "lifted" from white journals proper references should be made to their sources. This practice should be followed, especially in cases of copyrighted articles.

(11) Contributors should be encouraged by cash and prompt payments whenever good stories are sent in, especially by the better class newspapers who certainly can afford to pay.

## Appendix I — Bibliography

A large portion of this list is prepared with the help of the Lincoln University School of Journalism, Jefferson City, Missouri. In general, all books and theses will prove scholarly and valuable reading. Those marked with an asterisk (\*) are, in the opinion of the author, of great value. They include some unscholarly and biased opinions, but the author regards them important because of their popularity and their tremendous influence on the reading public. Students of the Negro Press should be thoroly familiar with their contents and their popular influence. References to articles appearing in newspapers are of little value because of the practical impossibility of getting to them. A few such articles of exceptional quality are, however, included in this list since the Lincoln University School of Journalism had done the hard job of getting them together.

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## Appendix II—Directory of Negro Newspapers

This directory is prepared with the help of the *Editor and Publisher's International Year Book*, 1948; Ayer's *Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*, 1948; *Negro Newspapers in the United States*, 1945, prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census; the *Negro Year Book*, 1947; the *Negro Handbook*, 1946-1947; and information gathered by the author thru direct correspondence with newspaper men. Several changes have taken place in the publication of many newspapers and every attempt was made to make this list as up-to-date as possible.

Unless otherwise indicated immediately after the names of newspapers, they are issued once a week. The abbreviations "sm" and "bw" stand for semi-monthly and bi-weekly; "sw" and "d" stand for semi-weekly and daily.

Independent, Independent Republican, Republican, Non-Partisan, Negro Interest, Democrat, and Independent Democrat are some of the platforms of Negro papers. For all practical purposes, however, these platforms do not mean much in the general run of the papers. All of them are interested in Negro life and hence have 100 per cent Negro Interest.

Considerable difficulty was experienced in finding accurate names of papers since most directories omit the city names preceding newspaper names even when they are part of the real names.

A separate list of all college campus publications is given at the end of this directory as Appendix III. Religious, fraternal, and



## APPENDIX

other special interest publications are entirely omitted from this list as they would serve no practical purpose here.

Circulation figures are taken from the directories referred to above, but no attempt is made to distinguish the different sources from which these 1947 figures were obtained except to print all ABC figures in italics. Newspapers marked with an asterisk (\*) are the ones which were given special study for the purposes of this book.

The number appearing immediately after the city is the zone number of the newspaper's address.

Names are listed in the alphabetical order of states, of cities within each state, and of newspapers within each city.

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
ALABAMA		
* <i>Weekly Review</i> , Birmingham 3 1622 Fourth Avenue N.	1933	11,900
* <i>World</i> (sw), Birmingham 1 312 Seventeenth Street N.	1931	8,800
<i>Tri-Cities Informer &amp; Call Post</i> , Gadsden	†	7,000
<i>Gulf Informer</i> , Mobile 558 St. Francis Street	1943	10,000
* <i>Mobile Weekly Advocate</i> , Mobile 10 559 St. Michael Street	1911	†
<i>Press Forum Weekly</i> , Mobile	1894	†
<i>Alabama Tribune</i> , Montgomery 2 P.O. Box 1264	1935	1,500
<i>Alabama Citizen</i> , Tuscaloosa 1307 Twenty-Seventh Avenue	1943	10,000

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PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
ARIZONA		
<i>Arizona's Negro Journal</i> , Tucson 167 Meyer Street	†	†
ARKANSAS		
<i>Crusader Journal</i> , Hot Springs	†	3,200
* <i>Arkansas Survey-Journal</i> , Little Rock 1516 W. Sixteenth Street	1934	12,500
<i>Arkansas World</i> , Little Rock 905 Gaines Street	1940	12,600
<i>State Press</i> , Little Rock 923 W. Ninth Street	1941	12,700
<i>Negro Spokesman</i> , Pine Bluff 1809 Missouri Street	1938	10,000
CALIFORNIA		
* <i>California Eagle</i> , Los Angeles 11 4073 S. Central Avenue	1879	10,000
* <i>Criterion</i> , Los Angeles 14 124 W. Sixth Street	1940	†
<i>Los Angeles Sentinel</i> , Los Angeles 11 1050 E. Forty-Third Place	1934	12,300
* <i>Los Angeles Tribune</i> , Los Angeles 11 4225 S. Central Avenue	1940	5,100
<i>Neighborhood News</i> , Los Angeles 11 5000 S. Central Avenue	1930	5,000
<i>New Age-Dispatch</i> , Los Angeles 21 1415 S. Central Avenue	1904	†
<i>California Voice</i> , Oakland 12 2624 San Pablo Avenue	1919	10,500

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PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>Herald</i> , Oakland 1570 Seventh Street	1943	5,000
<i>Tri-County Bulletin</i> , San Bernardino 797 Perris Street	1945	5,300
<i>Comet</i> , San Diego 2 2739 Imperial Avenue	1946	8,400
<i>San Francisco Reporter</i> , San Francisco 1740 Post Street	†	8,000
<i>San Francisco Sun</i> , San Francisco	†	20,000
COLORADO		
<i>Colorado Statesman</i> , Denver 5 615 Twenty-Seventh Street	1890	4,000
* <i>Star</i> , Denver 910 Twentieth Street	1880	4,000
<i>Western Ideal</i> , Pueblo 100 W. First Street	1911	1,200
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA		
* <i>Afro-American</i> (sw), Washington 1 1800 Eleventh Street, N.W.	1933	34,800 (total)
FLORIDA		
* <i>Florida Tatler</i> , Jacksonville 511 Broad Street	1934	10,500
<i>Progressive News</i> , Jacksonville 355 E. Union Street	1938	7,100
<i>Florida Spur</i> , Ft. Lauderdale P.O. Box 1378	1947	†
* <i>Florida Times</i> , Miami 1112 N.W. Third Avenue	1923	5,000

# D I R E C T O R Y — G E N E R A L

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>Miami Tropical Dispatch</i> , Miami 1013 N.W. Second Avenue	1929	1,500
<i>Miami Whip</i> , Miami 1109 N.W. Second Avenue	1943	2,500
<i>Colored Citizen</i> , Pensacola 203 Baylen Street	1913	1,600
<i>Courier</i> , Pensacola 513 N. Reus Street	1935	4,000
<i>Florida Record-Dispatch</i> , Tallahassee	1947	2,000
* <i>Florida Sentinel</i> , Tampa P.O. Box 2619	†	9,600
* <i>Tampa Bulletin</i> , Tampa 1 P.O.Box 2232	1914	6,000
G E O R G I A		
<i>Albany Enterprise</i> , Albany 517 Gordon Avenue	1937	2,200
<i>Albany Southwestern Georgian</i> , Albany	1947	2,000
* <i>Atlanta Daily World</i> (d), Atlanta 3 210 Auburn Avenue, N.E.	1932	18,500
—— (National; w), Atlanta 3	1928	11,500
<i>Augusta Review</i> , Augusta	1947	†
<i>World</i> , Columbus 1024 First Avenue	1940	2,600
<i>Rome Enterprise</i> (bw), Rome 503 Branhan Avenue	1904	2,100

## APPENDIX

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>Savannah Herald</i> , Savannah	†	2,500
* <i>Savannah Tribune</i> , Savannah 1009 W. Broad Street	1875	4,100
ILLINOIS		
<i>Illinois Times</i> , Champaign 208 Ells Avenue	1939	1,000
* <i>Chicago Defender</i> (National), Chicago 3435 Indiana Avenue	16 1905	131,600
—— (Local)	1905	62,300
* <i>Chicago Sunday Bee</i> , Chicago 3655 S. State Street	9 1925	Suspended in 1947
* <i>Chicago World</i> , Chicago 118 E. Thirty-Fifth Street	16 1918	35,000
<i>Crusader</i> , East St. Louis 2215 Missouri Avenue	1943	†
<i>Robbins Herald</i> , Robbins P.O. Box 169	1917	3,600
<i>Illinois Chronicle</i> , Springfield 1210 S. Sixteenth Street	1917	1,200
<i>Illinois Conservator</i> (sm), Springfield 725½ E. Washington Street	1902	4,000
INDIANA		
<i>American Standard</i> , Evansville	1947	7,000
* <i>Consolidated News</i> (bw), Evansville 701½ E. Walnut Street	1943	3,500
* <i>Gary American</i> , Gary 2085 Broadway	1927	5,800

# DIRECTORY—GENERAL

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>Lake County Observer</i> , Gary 1629 Massachusetts Street	1946	3,700
* <i>Indianapolis Recorder</i> , Indianapolis 7 518-520 Indiana Avenue	1893	11,100
IOWA		
* <i>Iowa Bystander</i> , Des Moines • 221½ Locust Street	1894	1,800
* <i>Iowa Observer</i> , Des Moines 515 Mulberry Street	1936	5,500
KANSAS		
<i>People's Elevator</i> , Kansas City 16 503 N. Sixth Street	1892	†
* <i>Plainedealer</i> , Kansas City 2 1612 N. Fifth Street	1899	3,500
<i>Wyandotte Echo</i> , Kansas City 2 1908 N. Mill Street	1928	2,000
<i>Negro Star</i> , Wichita 6 1241 Wabash Avenue	1908	3,000
KENTUCKY		
<i>Kentucky Reporter</i> , Louisville 1101 W. Chestnut Street	1900	†
* <i>Louisville Defender</i> , Louisville 418 S. Fifth Street	1933	17,000
* <i>Louisville Leader</i> , Louisville 3 930-932 W. Walnut Street	1917	15,300
<i>Louisville News</i> , Louisville 442 S. Seventh Street	1926	†

## APPENDIX

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
LOUISIANA		
* <i>Informer and Sentinel</i> , New Orleans 7 2101 Dryades Street	1939	3,000
* <i>Louisiana Weekly</i> , New Orleans 13 601 Dryades Street	1925	15,700
* <i>Shreveport Sun</i> , Shreveport P.O. Box 191	1920	10,600
MARYLAND		
* <i>Afro-American</i> (National), Baltimore 1 628 N. Eutaw Street	1892	80,000
—— (Local; sw; total weekly circulation)		60,600
MASSACHUSETTS		
* <i>Boston Chronicle</i> , Boston 18 794 Tremont Street	1919	3,600
<i>Boston Guardian</i> , Boston 20 977 Tremont Street	1901	10,000
<i>Boston Times</i> , Boston 412A Massachusetts Avenue P.O. Box 187	1943	11,000
MICHIGAN		
* <i>Detroit Tribune</i> , Detroit 1 2146 St. Antoine Street	1922	30,600
<i>Detroit World Echo</i> , Detroit 26 1308 Broadway	1938	†
* <i>Michigan Chronicle</i> , Detroit 1 268 Eliot Street	1936	26,500
<i>Voice</i> , Inkster 3054 Inkster Road	†	18,800

# DIRECTORY—GENERAL

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>Commentator</i> , Pontiac	1947	3,500
<i>Ypsilanti Washtenaw Sun</i> , Ypsilanti	†	3,500
MINNESOTA		
* <i>Minneapolis Spokesman</i> , Minneapolis 15 314 Third Avenue S.	1934	3,600
* <i>Recorder</i> , St. Paul 312 Newton Building	1934	3,300
MISSISSIPPI		
<i>Delta Leader</i> , Greenville 1513 Alexander	1938	8,000
<i>Jackson Advocate</i> , Jackson 125½ N. Farish Street	1939	3,000
<i>Weekly Recorder</i> , Jackson 7 523 Bloom Street	†	3,500
<i>Mound Bayou Digest</i> , Mound Bayou	†	3,000
MISSOURI		
* <i>Call</i> , Kansas City 10 1715 E. Eighteenth Street	1919	41,400
* <i>St. Louis American</i> , St. Louis 3 11 N. Jefferson Avenue	1927	14,500
* <i>St. Louis Argus</i> , St. Louis 3 2312 Market Street	1912	20,600
NEBRASKA		
* <i>Omaha Guide</i> , Omaha 10 2420 Grant Street	1927	2,000
<i>Omaha Star</i> , Omaha 10 2216 N. Twenty-Fourth Street	1938	†



## APPENDIX

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
NEW JERSEY		
* <i>New Jersey Afro-American</i> , Newark 3 173 W. Kinney Street	1940	20,800
* <i>New Jersey Herald-News</i> , Newark 3 130 W. Kinney Street	1927	19,900
<i>New Jersey Record</i> , Newark 3 129 W. Market Street	1934	†
NEW YORK		
<i>Buffalo Criterion</i> , Buffalo 4 367 William Street	1925	2,500
* <i>Buffalo Star</i> , Buffalo 4 234 Broadway	1932	12,600
* <i>Amsterdam News</i> (sw), New York 27 2340 Eighth Avenue	1909	105,300
* <i>New York Age</i> , New York City 30 230 W. 135th Street	1885	29,300
* <i>People's Voice</i> , New York City 27 210 W. 125th Street	1942	16,800
<i>Rochester Star</i> , Rochester 8 159 Troup Street	1947	2,800
<i>Voice of New York State</i> , Rochester 8 446 Clarissa Street	1934	12,600
<i>Progressive Herald</i> , Syracuse 3 815 E. Fayette Street	1933	5,100
NORTH CAROLINA		
<i>Southern News</i> , Asheville 121 Southside Avenue	1936	2,700
<i>Eagle</i> , Charlotte	1947	15,000

# D I R E C T O R Y — G E N E R A L

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>Post</i> , Charlotte 2 624 E. Second Street	1920	3,000
* <i>Carolina Times</i> , Durham 814½ Fayetteville Street	1919	9,500
<i>Carolinian</i> , Fayetteville	†	5,000
<i>Mountain News</i> , Hendersonville	1939	†
<i>People's Chronicle</i> , Kinston	1947	10,000
<i>Carolinian</i> , Raleigh 118 E. Hargett Street	1920	15,000
<i>Journal</i> , Wilmington 412 S. Seventh Street	1945	10,000
<i>People's Spokesman</i> , Winston-Salem 721 E. Seventh Street	1945	5,000

## O H I O

* <i>Independent</i> , Cincinnati 653 W. Court Street	1939	6,000
* <i>Union</i> , Cincinnati 2 238 E. Fourth Street	1907	3,000
* <i>Cleveland Call and Post</i> , Cleveland 4 2319 E. Fifty-Fifth Street	1921	23,400
* <i>Cleveland Guide</i> , Cleveland 6 2279 E. Ninetieth Street	1931	4,500
* <i>Cleveland Herald</i> , Cleveland 1255 E. 105th Street	1939	7,200
* <i>Ohio State News</i> , Columbus 3 1112 Mt. Vernon Avenue	1935	15,800

# APPENDIX

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
* <i>Forum</i> , Dayton 2 414 W. Fifth Street	1913	3,500
* <i>Ohio Daily Express</i> (d), Dayton 7 1007 Germantown Street	1943	2,500
<i>Butler County American</i> , Hamilton 422 S. Front Street	1939	†
<i>Toledo Script Newspaper</i> , Toledo 2 1001½ City Park Avenue	1943	5,200
* <i>Buckeye Review</i> , Youngstown 423 Oakhill Avenue	1938	1,800

## OKLAHOMA

<i>Oklahoma Independent</i> , Muskogee 325 N. Second Street	1932	4,000
* <i>Black Dispatch</i> , Oklahoma City 1 324 N.E. Second Street	1914	17,000
<i>Okmulgee Observer</i> , Okmulgee 411 E. Fifth Street	1927	1,800
<i>Appeal</i> , Tulsa 419 N. Greenwood Street	1938	4,900
* <i>Oklahoma Eagle</i> , Tulsa 1 123 N. Greenwood Street	1920	5,100

## OREGON

<i>Inquirer</i> , Portland	1945	†
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## PENNSYLVANIA

<i>Crusader</i> , Chester 811 Central Avenue	1945	2,500
* <i>Afro-American</i> , Philadelphia 47 427 S. Broad Street	1934	26,100

# D I R E C T O R Y — G E N E R A L

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
<i>*Independent</i> , Philadelphia 46 1708 Lombard Street	1931	23,800
<i>*Tribune</i> (sw), Philadelphia 46 524-526 S. Sixteenth Street	1884	18,500 (total)
<i>*Pittsburgh Courier</i> , Pittsburgh 30 2628 Centre Avenue	1910	277,900
RHODE ISLAND		
<i>Providence Chronicle</i> , Providence 48 Cranston Street	1940	1,600
SOUTH CAROLINA		
<i>Lighthouse and Informer</i> , Columbia 1 1022½ Washington Street	1938	5,500
<i>*Palmetto Leader</i> , Columbia 1310 Assembly Street	1925	6,700
TENNESSEE		
<i>Chatanooga Citizen</i> , Chatanooga	1947	†
<i>Chatanooga Observer</i> , Chatanooga 124½ E. Ninth Street	1933	3,800
<i>East Tennessee News</i> , Knoxville 6 202 E. Vine Avenue	1906	6,000
<i>Flashlight Herald</i> , Knoxville 10 1306 College Street	1931	†
<i>Monitor</i> , Knoxville 15 347 Preston Street	1944	5,000
<i>Memphis World</i> (sw), Memphis 388 Beale Avenue	1931	30,000 (total)
<i>*Globe and Independent</i> , Nashville 403 Charlotte Avenue	1906	18,000

# APPENDIX

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
TEXAS		
<i>Industrial Era</i> (bw), Beaumont 1108 Gladys Street	1903	3,000
* <i>Express</i> , Dallas P.O. Box 185	1892	12,100
<i>Fort Worth Defender</i> , Fort Worth 910 Grove Street	1943	5,000
<i>Fort Worth Mind</i> , Fort Worth 3 915½ Calhoun Street	1931	4,000
<i>Houston Defender</i> , Houston 3 1423 W. Dallas Street	1930	4,500
* <i>Houston Informer</i> , Houston 1 2418 Leeland Avenue	1893	6,400
<i>Informer and Texas Freeman</i> , Houston 1 2418 Leeland Avenue	1893	24,300
<i>Negro Labor News</i> , Houston 2 419½ Milam Street	1931	10,000
<i>San Antonio Informer</i> , San Antonio 322 S. Pine Street	1893	1,700
<i>San Antonio Register</i> , San Antonio 6 207 N. Centre Street	1931	9,700
<i>Waco Messenger</i> , Waco 109 Bridge Avenue	1932	4,000
VIRGINIA		
* <i>Journal and Guide</i> , Norfolk 1 719-723 E. Olney Road	1899	62,900
<i>Richmond Afro-American</i> , Richmond 6 504 N. Third Street	1939	13,300
<i>Tribune</i> , Roanoke	†	15,000

# DIRECTORY—GENERAL

PUBLICATION AND LOCATION	FOUNDED	CIRCULATION
WASHINGTON		
<i>Northwest Enterprise</i> , Seattle 1801 Rainier Avenue	1918	8,200
WISCONSIN		
<i>Globe</i> , Milwaukee 5 923 W. Walnut Street	1945	15,000
<i>Wisconsin Enterprise-Blade</i> , Milwaukee 715 W. Somers Street	1916	50,000

## Appendix III—Directory of College Campus Publications

(Arranged in the alphabetical order of colleges)

A & T College, Greensboro, North Carolina. *Register*.

Alabama State Teachers College, Montgomery, Alabama. *Bulletin*  
(Organ of the American Teachers Association).

Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia. *Phylon*.

———. *Atlanta University Bulletin*.

Bluefield State Teachers College, Bluefield, West Virginia. *Bluefieldian*.

Cheyney Training School for Teachers, Cheyney, Pennsylvania.  
*Cheyney Record*.

Delaware State College, Dover, Delaware, *Lantern*.

Downington Industrial School, Downington, Pennsylvania. *Downington Bulletin*.

Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee. *Fisk Herald*.

———. *Fisk News*.

———. *Monthly Summary of Events and Trends in Race Relations* (Social Science Institute).

Florida A & M College, Tallahassee, Florida. *Famcean*.

———. *Florida A & M Quarterly*.

Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Georgia. *Foundation*.

Georgia State College, Industrial College, Georgia. *Georgia Herald*.

Hampton Institute, Virginia. *Hampton Script*.

## DIRECTORY—COLLEGE

———. *Virginia Teachers Bulletin*.

Howard University, District of Columbia. *Hilltop*.

———. *Howard University Bulletin*.

———. *Journal of Negro Education*.

Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina. *Johnson C. Smith University Bulletin*.

———. *Quarterly Review of Higher Education among Negroes*.  
Kentucky State College, Frankfort, Kentucky. *Kentucky Thoro-*  
*bred*.

Knoxville College, Knoxville, Tennessee. *Aurora*.

Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma. *Southwestern Journal*.

Le Moyne College, Memphis, Tennessee. *Le Moynite*.

Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri. *Lincoln Clarion*.

———. *Lincoln Journalism Newsletter*.

Lincoln University, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania. *Lincolnian*.

Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia. *Maroon Tiger*.

———. *Morehouse Alumnus*.

Morgan State College, Baltimore, Maryland. *Morgan State Col-*  
*lege Bulletin*.

———. *Spokesman*.

Philander Smith College, Little Rock, Arkansas. *Panther Journal*.

Prairie View University, Prairie View, Texas. *Panther*.

———. *Standard*.

St. Augustine's Seminary, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. *St. Augus-*  
*tine's Messenger*.

Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. *Southern Univer-*  
*sity Digest*.

Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. *Campus Mirror*.



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———. *Spelman Messenger*.

Talladega College, Talladega, Alabama. *Talladega Student*.

Tennessee A & I State College, Nashville 8, Tennessee, *Broadcaster*.

———. *Bulletin*.

Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. *Campus Digest*.

———. *Negro Worker*.

———. *Negro Farmer*.

———. *Pulling Together*.

———. *Service Magazine*.

———. *Tuskegee Messenger*.

Virginia State College, Petersburg, Virginia. *Virginia Statesman*.

Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia. *Virginia Union Bulletin*.

West Virginia State College, Institute, West Virginia. *Yellow Jacket*.

Wilberforce University, Wilberforce, Ohio. *Negro College Quarterly*.\*

———. *Mirror*.

Wiley College, Marshall, Texas. *Wiley Reporter*.

Xavier University, New Orleans, Louisiana. *Xavier Herald*.

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\*Temporarily suspended.

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